



‘Indomitable spirit’

Vice President Pence
praises Polish people
at World War II 80th
anniversary ceremony

BY JENNIFER H. SVAN
Stars and Stripes

WARSAW, Poland — Vice President Mike Pence praised the Polish people for their “indomitable spirit” at a ceremony Sunday to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the outbreak of World War II.

Pence was among dozens of foreign leaders gathered in the city’s historic Piłsudski Square.

The vice president spoke after Poland President Andrzej Duda

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Holocaust survivor Edward Mosberg attends a ceremony honoring the 80th anniversary of the start of World War II in Warsaw, Poland, on Sunday.

BRIAN FERGUSON/Stars and Stripes

At ‘threshold’ of peace deal, Taliban stage second attack in as many days

BY PHILLIP WALTER WELLMAN
Stars and Stripes

KABUL, Afghanistan — The Taliban attacked a second provincial capital in as many days on Sunday, even as the insurgents were “at the threshold” of a deal with the United States that could end America’s longest war.

Insurgents attacked Pul-e-Khumri, the capital of northern Baghlan province,

‘What that suggests to me is that [the Taliban] are not just keeping open the possibility, but they are also intending to continue to fight despite a withdrawal of U.S. forces.’

Seth Jones
counterinsurgency expert

from several entry points around 5 a.m. with gunbattles continuing until the afternoon, provincial police chief spokesman Javed Basharat said.

Reinforcements arrived from Kabul and had contained the fighting to the outskirts of the city, according to Basharat, who said at least two members of the security forces and three Taliban fighters were killed.

The Associated Press reported at least

four civilians were killed in the fighting and another 20 wounded.

The assault came a day after Taliban fighters conducted a major attack on Kunduz, a strategically located northern city and capital of Kunduz province.

At least 19 civilians and Afghan forces were killed in the clashes, in addition to three dozen Taliban fighters, according to

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7 dead following shooting spree in West Texas

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Erdogan sets deadline for action on safe zone

Associated Press

ISTANBUL — Turkey's president threatened Saturday to launch a unilateral offensive into northeastern Syria if plans to establish a so-called safe zone along Turkey's border fail to meet his expectations, including a demand that Turkish soldiers control the corridor.

Speaking to graduates of a military academy in Istanbul, Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the U.S. had up to three weeks to satisfy Turkish demands.

Earlier in August, Turkish and U.S. officials agreed to set up the zone east of the Euphrates River. Ankara wants U.S.-backed Syrian Kurdish fighters, considered terrorists by Turkey, to pull back from the border.

"If our soldiers do not start to control the area actively, we will have no choice but to activate our own operational plans," Erdogan said.

Turkey has been pressing to control — in coordination with the U.S. — a 19- to 25-mile-deep zone within civil war-ravaged Syria, running east of the Euphrates all the way to the border with Iraq.

On Friday, Erdogan said Turkish officials had "temporarily" agreed to a safe zone proposed by the U.S. that is narrower than 20 miles.

The two countries set up a joint operations center in Turkey's border province of Sanliurfa last month and started helicopter patrols. But Turkish officials have



PRESIDENTIAL PRESS SERVICE/AP, Pool

Turkey President Recep Tayyip Erdogan arrives to deliver a speech to graduates of a military academy in Istanbul on Saturday. Erdogan said the U.S. has up to three weeks to satisfy Turkish demands on a safe zone along Turkey's border.

repeatedly vowed to go it alone if the U.S. delays safe zone plans.

Turkey sees the Syrian Kurdish fighters, who make up the majority of the Syrian Democratic Forces, as an extension of a Kurdish insurgency within Turkey. American troops are stationed in northeast Syria, along with the Kurdish forces, and have fought Islamic State together. The

differing positions on the Kurdish fighters have become a major source of tension between NATO allies Turkey and the U.S.

Erdogan said his visit to New York this month for the U.N. General Assembly, where he's expected to meet President Donald Trump, would be a "last chance" before a Turkish offensive.

Oil tanker pursued by US is off Syrian coast

By JON GAMBRELL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — An Iranian oil tanker pursued by the U.S. across the Mediterranean Sea slowed to a near-stop Sunday off the coast of Syria, where America's top diplomat alleges it will be unloaded despite denials from Tehran.

The ongoing saga of the Adrian Darya 1, formerly known as the Grace 1, comes as tensions remain high between the U.S. and Iran over its unraveling nuclear deal with world powers. Tehran is set to send a deputy foreign minister and a team of economists to Paris on Monday for talks over ways to salvage the accord after a call between Iranian President Hassan Rouhani and French President Emmanuel Macron.

The ship-tracking website MarineTraffic.com showed the Adrian Darya slowed to a near-stop on Sunday some 50 nautical miles off Syria. The ship's Automatic Identification System does not show its destination after its mariners onboard previously listed it as ports in Greece and Turkey.

Turkey's foreign minister at one point suggested it would go to Lebanon, something denied by a Lebanese official.

The U.S. has been warning countries not to accept the Adrian Darya, which carries 2.1 million barrels of crude oil worth some \$130 million.

The U.S. has sanctioned the Adrian Darya's captain and has sought to impound the vessel.

Authorities in Gibraltar alleged the ship was bound for a refi-

ery in Baniyas, Syria, when they seized it in early July. They ultimately let it go.

On Friday, U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo alleged on Twitter that the ship was still bound for Syria.

"We have reliable information that the tanker is underway and headed to Tartus, Syria," Pompeo wrote on Twitter. "I hope it changes course."

Iranian officials have said the oil onboard the Adrian Darya had been sold to an unnamed buyer. However, anyone buying Iranian crude oil would be subject to U.S. sanctions.

Syrian President Bashar Assad's adviser, Bouthaina Shaaban, separately told the Lebanon-based Al-Mayadeen TV that Damascus is trying to get oil that its people need "but authorities don't know where the Iranian tanker is heading."

Meanwhile, Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araghchi is due to travel to Paris with economists Monday, the state-run IRNA news agency reported. That came after a call Saturday between Rouhani and Macron, who recently surprised the Group of Seven summit in France by inviting Iranian Foreign Minister Mohammad Javad Zarif there.

Iran is set to further break the terms of the nuclear deal on Friday if Europe fails to offer it a way to sell its crude oil on the global market.

The U.S. under President Donald Trump unilaterally withdrew from the deal over a year ago and imposed sanctions on Iran that are battering its economy.

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WAR ON TERRORISM

Afghans see little voice in their own future

BY CARA ANNA
AND TAMEEM AKHGAR
Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — For almost a year, Afghanistan's more than 30 million people have been in the awkward position of waiting as a United States envoy and the Taliban negotiate their country's fate behind closed doors.

An agreement on ending America's longest war, which the U.S. once hoped to reach by Sept. 1, could set a timeline for U.S. troops' withdrawal but also nudge aside this month's presidential election and open the way for a Taliban return to power. The militants continue their attacks, again invading a major city, Kunduz, on Saturday and the city of Puli Khumri on Sunday.

Without a say in their own future, Afghans' frustration is clear. "We don't know what is going on but we are just so tired," said Sonia, a teacher in the capital, Kabul, who like many people goes by one name.

Reflecting the helplessness, a new television ad shows residents of all 34 provinces holding up pieces of paper that simply say "Peace." An art group in Kabul has begun painting concrete blast walls with tens of thousands of tulips, the national flower, as symbols of the civilians killed in nearly 18 years of fighting.

And a peace movement praised by Afghans for a daring march across the country warns that the Taliban, who control or hold sway over roughly half of Afghanistan nearly two decades after a U.S.-led invasion toppled them from power, are just as harsh as the days when women were forced out of sight and entertainment was banned under a strict form of Islamic law.

A 23-year-old member of the peace movement, Sayed Rahim Omid, shyly lowered his trousers and showed The Associated Press a still-painful wound on his leg where he said Taliban members at hometown in southern Helmand province had whipped him with cables. Stop your activism, they told him last month. Who's paying you?

His family secured his release by swearing he would never speak out again. Then he promptly fled to Kabul. Several peace marchers



An Afghan man Saturday reads a local newspaper about peace in Kabul, Afghanistan. Many Afghans are frustrated because they don't have a say in their own future.

'We just have to come to our senses and say, 'It's enough. Let's find another way.''

Omaid Sharifi
ArtLords



have been beaten up, he and fellow members said.

"I don't know how to trust them," Omid said of the Taliban, even as its leaders meet with the U.S. envoy, Afghan-born Zalmay Khalilzad, in a luxury setting in Qatar and signal regret for their past ways.

Repentance about the present seems to be another matter. A former Taliban military leader in a province neighboring Kabul, Syed Akbar Agha, defended the beatings, saying the peace movement gives the impression the insurgent group doesn't want the war to end.

Sitting in a leafy yard in Kabul,

he insisted the Taliban's tens of thousands of members will respect whatever is agreed to in Qatar, where the group has a political office. He pointed to last year's extraordinary cease-fire during the Muslim holiday of Eid al-Fitr during which fighters and Afghans chatted and posed for photos. The Taliban later rejected a government call to try it again.

Better times are on the way for the Afghan people, Agha said, as some 20,000 U.S. and other foreign troops prepare to withdraw in return for Taliban assurances that Afghanistan won't be a haven for terrorist groups plotting overseas attacks.

"Good memories of the Taliban will help them trust the Taliban and support them," he said, but he bristled when asked how the insurgent group could justify punishments such as stoning and cutting off hands. "Are you a Muslim?" he demanded.

Such talk puts Afghans on the defensive. "If the Taliban dream of ruling the country as they once did, we don't need them," said Kabul resident Mahbob Shah.

The Taliban have refused to negotiate with the Afghan government and call it a U.S. puppet, raising serious questions about intra-Afghan talks meant to follow a U.S.-Taliban deal and work out the country's political future. Both sides should negotiate as "ordinary people" and form a new government, Agha said.

The belief that an interim government will follow a U.S.-Taliban agreement has led most candidates in the Sept. 28 presidential election, including Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah, to say they prioritize peace over a vote. The Taliban have warned Afghans to boycott the election, calling polling stations targets.

The developments anger President Ashraf Ghani, who seeks a second term and a strong mandate so the government can better negotiate with the Taliban, who already portray a U.S. troop withdrawal as their victory.

Wary Afghans appear more flexible, calling for peace above all.

Some also are skeptical that a 15-member negotiating team for intra-Afghan talks, yet to be announced by the government, will be representative of civil society and women, whose fate is especially fragile. The Taliban are expected to have power to strike people from that list.

A collapse of talks could bring another civil war, some analysts and Afghans say. The country has been ravaged for 40 years starting with a decade-long Russian occupation in 1979, followed by bloody infighting among mujahideen who had received U.S. backing against the Russians.

After a pro-Communist government fell and four years of civil war killed some 50,000 people, the Taliban took power in 1996. Now some of the former mujahideen who partnered with the U.S. to oust the Taliban are back in government.

In Kabul, where street protests can be targets for attacks, concerns about the future are often expressed more quietly.

"Anything you do in Afghanistan can be very dangerous," said Omaid Sharifi, whose ArtLords group paints tulips on blast walls in four cities to remember civilians killed in the current war.

The stenciled flowers are placed near attack sites, and some grieving family members join in, painting the names of the dead. Some 15,000 tulips have been completed.

Whatever the U.S. and Taliban discuss is their own business, Sharifi said, with the "real questions" starting when the Taliban sit down with regular Afghans for talks.

"We just have to find a way to live together," he said of the moment when the Taliban and the Afghan government face the reality of each other's existence. "We just have to come to our senses and say, 'It's enough. Let's find another way.'"

Attack: Fighting comes as US, Taliban negotiators wrap up latest talks in Qatar

FROM FRONT PAGE

the Defense Ministry, which said the city was calm Sunday.

More than 80 civilians were also wounded, a ministry official said.

The top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Gen. Scott Miller, arrived in Kunduz on Saturday to assist Afghan forces in defending the city, which briefly fell to the Taliban in 2015, U.S. officials said.

Coalition forces provided support to Afghan troops in both Kunduz and Puli-Khumri, a U.S. official told Stars and Stripes, without elaborating. The official spoke on

condition that they not be named.

The fighting came as the latest round of direct talks between Taliban and U.S. negotiators wrapped up in Qatar. Nine rounds of intermittent talks over the past year have focused on a deal that would allow U.S. troops to withdraw from Afghanistan in exchange for promises by the Taliban to prevent Afghanistan from becoming a terrorist safe haven.

Zalmay Khalilzad, the Afghan-born U.S. diplomat who has been leading negotiations for Washington, announced in an early morning tweet Sunday that he would be

traveling to Kabul later in the day for talks with the Afghan government.

"We are at the threshold of an agreement that will reduce violence and open the door for Afghans to sit together to negotiate an honorable and sustainable peace and a unified, sovereign Afghanistan that does not threaten the United States, its allies, or any other country," he said.

While the agreement would pave the way for intra-Afghan talks aimed at establishing a permanent ceasefire, analysts say it's unlikely to immediately stop fighting between the insurgents and government forces.

The Taliban's attacks in Kunduz and Puli-Khumri show the group is not disarming or demobilizing, which have been two key components of successful peace negotiations in the past, said Seth Jones, a counterinsurgency expert at the Center for Strategic and International Studies.

"What that suggests to me is that [the Taliban] are not just keeping open the possibility, but they are also intending to continue to fight despite a withdrawal of U.S. forces," Jones said.

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PACIFIC

Maritime exercise set to kick off in South China Sea

By WYATT OLSON
Stars and Stripes

Inaugural joint maritime drills between the United States and a group of Southeast Asian nations are scheduled to kick off Tuesday in the contested waters of the South China Sea.

The five-day exercise is intended to "build capacity in maritime domain awareness, information sharing and sea interdiction," according to a statement issued by the U.S. Embassy in Bangkok.

The exercise comes about a year after members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN, held their first official maritime exercise with China. ASEAN's 10 member nations are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam.

The weeklong China-ASEAN exercise featured helicopter cross-deck landings and a search-and-rescue operation, although only Singapore, Brunei, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam sent ships. Four other nations sent observers.

ASEAN's back-to-back exercises with China and the U.S. are part of a balancing act for the group. Its members are often at loggerheads over how best to respond to China's growing economic clout and naval might.

Some ASEAN members, such as the Philippines, Vietnam and Indonesia, are locked in disputes with China over territorial claims in the South China Sea.

On the other hand, Cambodia is moving ahead with construction

of a deep-water naval base for China's navy, Voice of America reported last week.

The ASEAN-U.S. Maritime Exercise will be co-hosted by Thailand and the U.S., the U.S. embassy said.

A spokesman for the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet in Japan told Stars and Stripes on Thursday that information about the exercise was not yet being released.

The Bangkok Post reported Aug. 24 that Thai Patrol Squadron commander Rear Adm. Somphon Nakthong was slated to lead the exercise's combined task force.

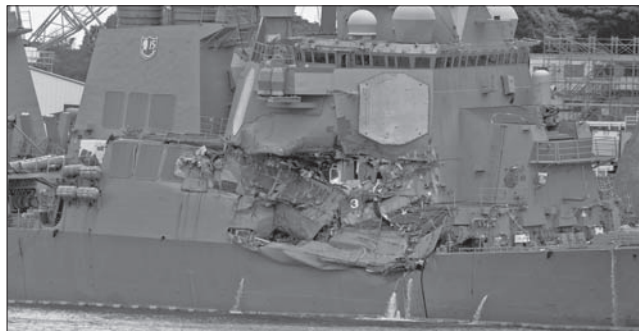
The newspaper, citing an unnamed source in the Thai Ministry of Defense, said U.S. Navy Capt. Matthew Jerbi, commodore of the Japan-based Destroyer Squadron 7, would serve as deputy commander of the task force.

The newspaper said the exercise would involve at least eight ships, including aircraft, and that the exercise would begin at Thailand's Sattahip naval base and extend to the southern tip of Vietnam.

Regional media have reported that the Philippine's navy is sending the patrol ship BRP Ramon Alcaraz.

Myanmar may also participate, despite sanctions the U.S. has placed on some of that nation's officials for their role in the deadly crackdown on Rohingya Muslims. Myanmar media reported the country will send a guided-missile frigate to the exercise.

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Stars and Stripes

The guided-missile destroyer USS Fitzgerald arrives at Yokosuka Naval Base, Japan, following a fatal collision with a merchant ship on June 17, 2017.

Japan safety board agrees with Navy's findings on Fitzgerald collision cause

By CAITLIN DOORNBOS
Stars and Stripes

YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE, Japan — The Japanese government has issued its report on the fatal USS Fitzgerald collision, more than two years after the destroyer ran into a commercial container ship.

Released Thursday, the Japan Transport Safety Board's findings echo a U.S. Navy report from late 2017 saying the accident was "preventable" and that the destroyer's watch standers contributed to the incident.

Seven Fitzgerald sailors were killed June 17, 2017, when the destroyer ran into the Philippine-flagged ACX Crystal about 60 nautical miles southwest of Yokosuka, where the warship is based.

"It is somewhat likely that USS FITZGERALD ... was not properly on the lookout for ACX CRYSTAL," Japan's report said.

Watch standers paid more at-

tention to another container ship sailing "parallel in the north of ACX Crystal," distracting them from focusing on the Philippine ship, the report said.

ACX Crystal signaled the Fitzgerald with a daylight signaling lamp prior to the collision, Japan's report said. The Navy report said the Fitzgerald's officer of the deck "fail[ed] to sound the danger signal and fail[ed] to attempt to contact Crystal on bridge-to-bridge radio."

ACX Crystal's crew "expected that the USS Fitzgerald would recognize them and avoid ACX Crystal," so it did not change its course or speed, Japan's report said. The report was ordered after the collision in accordance with Japanese law to determine its cause, "thereby preventing future accidents and reducing damage," board Chairman Nobuo Takeda wrote in the report translated from Japanese.

"It is not the purpose of the investigation to apportion blame or

liability," he wrote in the report.

It listed four suggested safety actions crews should take to "prevent recurrence of the same type of accidents." These included properly adjusting all radars "to sufficiently judge surrounding situations" and not operating on assumptions of neighboring ships' intentions.

"When [a] vessel fails to understand the intentions or actions of other vessel, or there is doubt that other vessels are taking sufficient action to avoid a collision, warning signals shall be sounded," the report said.

After the collision — and another in August 2017 involving the Yokosuka-based USS John S. McCain that killed 10 U.S. sailors — the Navy has taken steps to prevent future incidents by implementing about 100 changes. These include tightening surface warfare officer qualifications to improve watch standing.

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Japan calls for inspections, maintenance after helo loses cabin window

By MATTHEW M. BURKE
AND AYA ICHIHASHI
Stars and Stripes

CAMP FOSTER, Okinawa — Japan's Ministry of Defense is asking U.S. military officials for inspections and maintenance on Marine Corps CH-53E helicopters in Okinawa after a Super Stallion lost a cabin window during a routine flight.

The incident occurred Tuesday at approximately 5:30 p.m., about 5 miles east of Okinawa's main island, when a Super Stallion based at Marine Corps Air Station Futenma reportedly lost a 23-by-19-inch Plexiglas window, according to spokesmen from Okinawa Defense Bureau and the Marine Corps.

The 2-pound window was reportedly last seen while crewmembers from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 462 were flying over water.

No one was hurt and no property damage has been reported, 1st Marine Air-

craft Wing spokeswoman Capt. Brianna French wrote in an email Friday to Stars and Stripes.

The window was surrounded by a rubberized seal to provide for emergency exit. The cause of the incident is under investigation by Marine officials, she said.

"We remain committed to the airworthiness of our aircraft and to the safety of our surrounding communities," French wrote in the statement.

A spokesman for the Okinawa Defense Bureau said Friday that the incident will worry island residents. "We are very disappointed," he said.

The bureau represents Japan's Ministry of Defense on the island. It is customary in Japan for government spokespeople to speak on condition that their names not be used in press reports.

"We asked the U.S. officials to conduct thorough inspections and maintenance on the aircraft and take all the necessary measures not to let this happen again,"

the spokeswoman said.

Bureau officials did not request a halt to Super Stallion operations.

Okinawa prefectural government officials could not be reached for comment Friday.

In December 2017, a 3-foot-by-3-foot window fell from another Futenma-based Super Stallion and landed on an elementary school sports field adjacent to the base fence line.

More than 50 schoolchildren were playing at the time, and a boy was slightly injured from a pebble that flew up during impact.

The Navy instituted new maintenance procedures after a window fell out of a MH-53E Sea Dragon in July 2018 at Naval Air Facility Atsugi, about 30 miles southwest of central Tokyo.

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LEO AMARO/U.S. Marine Corps

A CH-53E Super Stallion trains in June over Okinawa, Japan. The Marines are investigating after a Super Stallion lost a cabin window Aug. 27.

MILITARY

US stealth bombers, British F-35s train together for 1st time

By CHRISTOPHER DENNIS
Stars and Stripes

FAIRFORD, England — U.S. B-2 stealth bombers trained with British F-35 Lightning II jets this week, marking the first time the Air Force aircraft have operated with those fighters from an allied nation, officials said Friday.

The visit of the three B-2 Spirit bombers from the 509th Bomber Wing, Whiteman Air Force Base, Mo., is part of the service's effort to stage more short strategic bomber rotations in Europe and elsewhere, and to improve response times in case of a crisis.

"This training demonstrates U.S. support to NATO and ... also enhances the U.S.'s ability to integrate bombers with fifth-generation fighter aircraft like the F-35," an Air Force statement said.

There has been at least one Air Force bomber rotation in Europe every year since 2014 when Russian forces annexed Ukraine's Crimean Peninsula. RAF Fairford routinely hosts those bomber deployments.

"Working alongside international fifth-generation aircraft provides unique training opportunities for us, bolsters our



CHRISTOPHER DENNIS/Stars and Stripes
Lt. Col. Robert N. Schoeneberg, Bomber Task Force commander, 393rd Expeditionary Squadron.

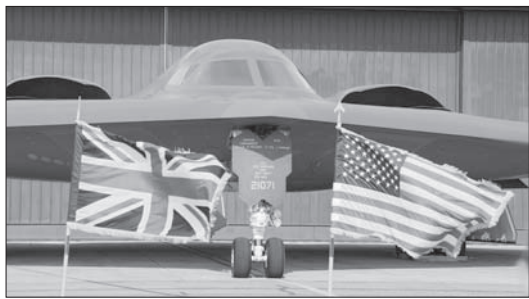
integration capabilities and showcases the commitment we have to our NATO alliance," said Lt. Col. Robert Schoeneberg, the B-2 task force commander.

The B-2s have trained with the F-35s since arriving in England on Tuesday, Schoeneberg told reporters at a ceremony Friday.

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UK Defense Ministry



Above: A U.S. Air Force B-2 Spirit deployed to RAF Fairford, England, flies above the English countryside near Dover with two British F-35 jets on Thursday.

Bottom: A B-2 Spirit stealth bomber from the 509th Bomb Wing.

CHRISTOPHER DENNIS
Stars and Stripes

Japan's Defense Ministry's 2020 budget request is largest ever

By HANA KUSUMOTO
Stars and Stripes

TOKYO — Japan's Defense Ministry on Friday requested its largest-ever budget and the seventh consecutive spending hike since Prime Minister Shinzo Abe took office in 2012.

The ministry is seeking 5.32 trillion yen, or about \$50 billion, for fiscal year 2020, which begins in April. The request reflects the Japanese government's efforts to strengthen defense in new domains, such as space and cybersecurity, as laid out in new National Defense Program Guidelines revised last year.

"We will improve defense capability at a speed fundamentally different from the past in order to respond to the security environment, which is changing by a remarkably fast pace," the proposal stated.

The Japan Self-Defense Forces rank among the world's largest and most capable, anywhere from No. 4 to No. 6, depending on who makes the list and how it's calculated.

Army-technology.com, for example, a website produced by a London-based media corporation, ranks Japan's military at No. 6, behind France and ahead of South Korea.

This year's defense budget

is 5.26 trillion yen, or \$49.4 billion, though the defense ministry had requested 5.3 trillion yen.

One of the largest expenditures in the budget request, 201 billion yen, or \$1.9 billion, is directed at costs related to U.S. forces stationed in Japan. Most of that request, 152 billion yen, or \$1.43 billion, would pay the salaries of Japanese workers employed by the U.S. military, utility costs and the costs associated with moving U.S. forces for training.

Another 21.9 billion yen, or \$206 million, is requested for the Facilities Improvement Program, which covers the maintenance cost of barracks and on-base family housing. Another 26.9 billion yen, or \$253 million, is requested to cover social insurance premiums for Japanese employees.

The defense ministry left empty the amount it needs for expenses related to realignment of U.S. forces such costs related to moving U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam; however, that amount may be determined by the end of the year.

For 2020, the defense ministry asked for 84.6 billion yen, about \$795 million, to purchase six F-35B Lightning II fighter jets from the United States. Japan announced Aug. 16 that it chose the F-35B to replace some of its aging

F-15 fighters.

Japan plans to purchase 42 of the stealth fighters in the next 10 years. It also plans to convert two Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Izumo-class helicopter destroyers to accommodate the F-35Bs.

The ministry requested 3.1 billion yen, about \$29 million, to repair and upgrade the JS Izumo next year. It plans to install guide lights and improve the heat-tolerance of the carrier's flight deck, defense officials said on the customary condition of anonymity.

The JMSDF plans on testing the Izumo with U.S. F-35Bs to determine the need for further upgrades, officials said. They expect improvements to be completed in 2024 along with the purchase of all six F-35Bs.

The ministry also asked for 31 billion yen, about \$291 million, to purchase three F-35As.

A second F-35A fighter squadron will be set up by the Japan Air Self-Defense Force at Misawa Air Base by March 2021, according to defense officials. The JASDF established the first squadron there this year. The new squadron will consist of 10 F-35As and 80 personnel, according to defense ministry officials. Japan plans to purchase 105 F-35As.

The ministry requested 12.2 billion yen, or \$114.6 million,

for costs related to acquiring an Aegis Ashore anti-ballistic missile defense system. But it did not request money to be used for specific sites or construction.

The ministry had listed Akita and Yamaguchi prefectures as candidate sites for an Aegis Ashore system, however, the numbers used to calculate certain data for these sites were not accurate and upset many locals.

The budget seeks 52.4 billion yen, about \$492.1 million, for space-related items, such as establishing a unit to watch space activities and sending SDF members to an Air Force base in Colorado for the basic space course.

It also seeks 23.8 billion yen, or \$223.6 million, to spend on cybersecurity, such as adding personnel to its cyber defense unit and conducting a defense ministry-hosted hacking contest.

It also plans to create a unit within JASDF for unmanned aerial vehicle RQ-4 Global Hawks, which are expected to be deployed to Misawa by March 2022.

The ministry hopes to allocate 2.8 billion yen, or \$23.6 million, to install equipment to counter aerial drones at its bases, including installations it shares with the United States.

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MILITARY



Left: Vice President Mike Pence shakes hands with Poland President Andrzej Duda during a ceremony honoring the 80th anniversary of the start of World War II in Warsaw, Poland, on Sunday. Right: Polish citizens who support the United States and President Donald Trump set up before a ceremony honoring the anniversary.



PHOTOS BY BRIAN FERGUSON/Stars and Stripes

Spirit: City's largest square is site of the anniversary

FROM FRONT PAGE

and German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, acknowledging he was in Warsaw on behalf of President Donald Trump. Trump canceled his two-day visit to Poland last week to monitor Hurricane Dorian, a maximum Category 5 storm that struck the Bahamas on Sunday.

"While the hearts of every American are with our fellow citizens in the path of a massive storm, today we remember how the gathering storm of the 20th century broke into warfare and invasion followed by unspeakable hardship and heroism of the Polish people," Pence said.

Nazi Germany invaded Poland on Sept. 1, 1939, triggering a war that lasted nearly six years and killed more than 70 million people, including more than 6 million Polish citizens.

"Today we remember those who were lost ... and all of those who sacrificed ... to win a victory for freedom," Pence said.

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier called the war a "painful legacy," while Duda said, "We must never forget it, even when all the eyewitnesses are gone."

Various heads of states from much of Europe were welcomed with pomp and circumstance at the city's largest square, used for military parades and national celebrations; the area was razed during World War II much like most of Warsaw.

SEE SPIRIT ON PAGE 7



Polish World War II veterans listen to Duda speak.



Spectators applaud during the ceremony.

Ceremony start marked with German remorse

BY MONIKA SCISLOWSKA
AND VANESSA GERA
Associated Press

WARSAW, Poland — Germany's president expressed deep remorse for the suffering his nation inflicted on Poland and the rest of Europe during World War II, warning of the dangers of nationalism as world leaders gathered Sunday in the country where the war started at incalculable costs.

"This war was a German crime," President Frank-Walter Steinmeier told Poland's top leaders, U.S. Vice President Mike Pence, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and other world leaders at the 80th anniversary ceremony marking World War II's outbreak.

Also in attendance were elderly Polish war veterans wearing military uniforms and a Holocaust survivor wearing a yellow Star of David and the striped clothes that prisoners wore at Nazi German death camps.

Steinmeier expressed his sorrow over the mass killings Adolf Hitler's regime committed in Poland, which paid a huge price for being the place war began on Sept. 1, 1939. The German president expressed gratitude to Poles for the gestures of forgiveness Poland has bestowed in return.

"I bow in mourning to the suffering of the victims," Steinmeier said. "I ask for forgiveness for Germany's historical debt. I affirm our lasting responsibility."

Two weeks after the German invasion, the Soviet army invaded Poland from the east, putting the country under a dual occupation that came with atrocities committed by two invaders.

By the war's end nearly six years later, about 6 million Polish citizens had been killed, more

than half of them Jews.

Polish President Andrzej Duda recalled Poland's immense suffering and he appealed to those assembled not to close their eyes now to imperial tendencies and border changes imposed through force.

Duda cited aggression against Georgia and Ukraine, and though he didn't name Russia, it was clear he found that country at fault as the aggressor.

"Recently in Europe, we are dealing with a return of imperialist tendencies, with attempts to change borders by force, with aggression against countries," Duda said.

"Turning a blind eye is not the recipe for preserving peace. It is a simple way to embolden aggressive personalities, a simple way to, in fact, give consent to further attacks." Germany's president had a modern-day warning of his own — about the dangers of nationalism — and described European unity as a guarantee for peace in the future.

Polish authorities didn't invite Russian President Vladimir Putin to attend anniversary events because of Moscow's annexation of Crimea and support for separatist fighters in eastern Ukraine.

SEE REMORSE ON PAGE 7

MILITARY

Spirit: Pence stresses bond between US and Poland

FROM PAGE 6

Russian President Vladimir Putin was not invited — unlike 10 years ago — because of Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014. Polish leaders had compared Russia's actions to “the aggressors of 1939.”

Pence spoke of the close bond between the United States and Poland.

Referring to remarks Trump made two years ago when he visited Warsaw, Pence said, “America loves Poland and America loves the Polish people,” eliciting claps from a U.S.-friendly crowd that later chant-

ed, “U.S.A., U.S.A.”

The somber remembrance at times felt more like a political rally.

A 2020 Trump campaign banner hung on a security barrier at the far perimeter of the square, behind which more than a dozen attendees wearing red “Poland Stands with USA” T-shirts gathered well before the ceremony began.

They had come to see Trump, a representative said, but were also pleased Pence attended.

“We like Trump, we support him, but

Poles don't know Mike Pence,” whom, as a conservative Christian, stands for values important to Poland, said Mateusz Wojnar, 40, a banker from Warsaw.

“People in Poland don't really know Mike Pence,” said Pawel Stachurski, 39, a carpenter from Lodz. “We're hoping his visit will change that.”

Before Trump canceled his visit, it was expected he and Duda, the Polish president, would disclose more details of an agreement reached between Washington and Warsaw in June to send an addition-

al 1,000 U.S. troops to Poland. More than 4,500 U.S. servicemembers are already deployed on a rotational basis to about half a dozen bases in Poland.

On Friday, Poland Defense Minister Mariusz Blaszczak, speaking at a joint news conference with U.S. National Security Adviser John Bolton, said the two countries had agreed on at least six locations for new U.S. troops to be stationed, according to Poland's TVN24 News.

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Polish war veterans attend the memorial ceremony in Warsaw, Poland.



Spectators at service in Wielun hold candles. The ceremony in Wielun, attended by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier and his Polish counterpart, Andrzej Duda, started at 4.40 a.m., the exact hour that, according to survivors, the war's first bombs fell, killing civilians.



PHOTOS BY CZAREK SOKOLOWSKI/AP

German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier speaks at the commemoration ceremony of the 80th anniversary of the start of World War II, in Wielun, Poland, on Sunday.

Remorse: Polish leader says German president's remarks provide 'moral satisfaction'

FROM PAGE 6

Russia's recent rehabilitation of the Stalinist era, and a pact Soviet leader Josef Stalin made with Hitler that led to Poland's dismemberment in 1939, were apparently also behind the decisions not to invite Putin. That represented a change from 10 years ago, when Putin was invited amid attempts to thaw relations between the West and Russia at the time.

President Donald Trump had originally been scheduled to attend the event, but canceled as Hurricane Dorian barreled toward the U.S. Pence spoke on behalf of the United States in Warsaw.

Pence said the Polish people “never lost hope” and “never gave in to despair.”

The “character, faith and determination of the Polish people made all the difference,” Pence said. “Your oppressors tried to break you, but Poland could not be broken.”

During the observances in Warsaw, church bells tolled across a capital that German forces razed to the ground decades ago. Polish and foreign leaders laid wreaths, and one by one rang a bell in memory.

The observances started at 4:40 a.m. at the sites of the first German attacks — Wielun, a de-

fenseless town, and minutes later on the Westerplatte Peninsula in Gdansk.

In Wielun, Steinmeier also voiced remorse, which Duda said provided “moral satisfaction.” He addressed his German counterpart.

“Mr. President, thank you for your presence and your attitude,” Duda said. “I can see a man who has come with humility, a bowed head in order to pay homage ... to share the pain.”

Minutes later, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki and Frans Timmermans, a top European Union official, led an event on Westerplatte Peninsula, the Baltic Coast site where Polish troops put up resistance to fight the war's first battle.

“Eighty years ago, unspeakable horrors were unleashed on the Polish population, unspeakable horrors that we need to remember to prevent them from recurring in Europe,” said Timmermans, the first vice president of the European Commission. “Can you imagine in this gathering that every fifth person sitting and standing here would suddenly disappear? This is what happened to the Polish nation at the hands of cruel Nazis who lost every understanding of humanity.”

MILITARY

Marines share thoughts on improving fitness programs

By CARLOS M. VAZQUEZ II
Stars and Stripes

The Marine Corps Force Fitness Division has asked Marines and the civilians who work with them for ideas on how to improve the Corps' physical fitness programs.

The Marine Corps' Fitness Operational Advisory Group released a survey in August looking for input on improving the Physical Fitness Test, Marine Corps Martial Arts Program, the Force Fitness Instructor Program, Civilian Certified Athletic Trainers in the Operating Forces, Marine Corps Water Survival Training Program and military occupational specialty specific physical standards.

The survey, which ended Saturday at www.fitness.marines.mil, had approximately 28 questions, depending on which program the respondent chose to address. Questions were tailored according to demographics, and documentation could be uploaded to support the survey-taker's ideas.

"We believe the unfettered input directly from individual Marines is of the utmost value," Col. Stephen Armes, director of Marine Corps Force Fitness Division and Training and Education Command, told Stars and Stripes via email Thursday. "We have already received hundreds of responses addressing multiple facets of the [physical fitness program]."

The group's primary role is to approve recommended solutions



LAUREN BRUNE/U.S. Marine Corps

to increase the overall fitness and readiness of Marines, Armes said.

Through the survey, Marines had an opportunity to give ideas about all areas of the physical fitness programs within the service and voice their opinions on topics such as enhancing education on performance nutrition, the use of new technology in workouts and how to better recover afterward.

"I think incorporating a deadlift event like how the Army is doing their test might be something interesting to try because in an actual combat operations scenario, you might have to be carrying something or someone heavy," Cpl. Gaven Tippett, a motor transport operator with Combat Logistics

Battalion 4 on Okinawa, told Stars and Stripes on Friday.

Those who took this year's survey could submit more than one idea about the various programs. Those submissions will be presented to the Marine Corps Combat Development Command's commanding general for recommended upgrades to the programs.

"We officially solicit ideas for the [Fitness Operational Advisory Group] annually, but the Force Fitness Division takes into account feedback gathered throughout the year by way of site visits, field show briefs, daily phone calls from the Corps ... and inputs set to our organizational inbox," Armes said.



PHUONG NGUYEN/U.S. Marine Corps

Above: An officer candidate lifts an ammo can during a combat fitness test at Marine Corps Base Quantico, Va., on July 16. Left: Marines perform planks during physical training July 26 at Marine Corps Air Station Iwakuni, Japan.

A recent change has been implemented to the service's Physical Fitness Test core exercise event as a result of research and feedback.

"One example is the inclusion of the plank as an alternative to the crunch on the Physical Fitness Test," Armes said. "This was an output from the FOAG last year that led to Force Fitness Division conducting research of the plank. The research gathered led to the Commandant of the Marine Corps decision to include the plank as an alternative to the crunch for the 2020 PFT season."

"I don't think that the incorporation of planks is a bad idea," Tippett said. "Because most people naturally roll over to the front

of their bodies to lift themselves up from the ground, so it's a good way to test and work out the core, compared to sit-ups."

Once a recommendation has been decided upon for an improvement to the physical fitness programs, a change can take between six to 10 months, Armes said.

"Physical fitness affects every Marine, and as such, each individual Marine's input is viewed equally," he said. "The FOAG is only as good as the recommendations we receive. We greatly appreciate the support and the time taken to provide these inputs."

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Lithuanian troops triumph in ground force competition

By JOHN VANDIVER
Stars and Stripes

Three Lithuanian units swept the top spots in this year's International Best Squad Competition, outperforming 13 other teams that included a U.S. Army contingent, officials said Friday.

Sixteen teams — nine from host nation Lithuania and seven international units — took part in the competition in Rukla in the center of the country. The winners were announced Friday.

U.S. Army Europe Command Sgt. Maj. Rob Abernethy, who was on hand to observe a portion of the competition, said such events help build ties between allies.

"Competition creates relationships that are going to be long lasting," Abernethy said by phone. "They are all fighting against each other to win this competition, but at the end of the day we are all on the same team."

The U.S. squad from the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry — a unit that serves as an opposition force for other units rotating through Hohenfels, Germany, on training missions — was led by Staff Sgt. Mark Blackwell. The competition kept soldiers "on their feet," he said.

"A couple things we ran into that we've never done before," Blackwell said, during a brief chat on Twitter with Abernethy in



STEPHEN P. PEREZ/U.S. Army

A squad of U.S. soldiers from 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry, 7th Army Training Command, locates their next event after performing in the grenade range event at the Lithuanian Land Forces Best Infantry Squad Competition on Aug. 28 in Rukla, Lithuania.

between events in Lithuania.

For example, as troops navigated the terrain they had to cross a river in a small boat, using just their hands to paddle, a first for the team, he said.

Complete results of where all the teams finished weren't immediately available Friday, but the top three finishers were squads

from Lithuania's 8th Territorial Defense Unit, 3rd Territorial Defense Unit and Lithuanian Land Forces' engineer battalion.

The competition took place over 36 hours with soldiers covering up to 25 miles as they tested their navigation skills through the night. European teams often excel in such international soldiering challenges. A

Latvian team was the winner of the previous best squad event, Abernethy said.

In July, a squad from the French Foreign Legion won the best sniper competition hosted by the U.S. Army at its base in Grafenwoehr, Germany.

The other top finishers in that event were the Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia and Sweden.

During last year's best tank team competition in Grafenwoehr, a unit from the German army — often criticized by Berlin's own military ombudsman for a lack of overall combat readiness — took the top spot.

U.S. teams trailing their European counterparts in competition could be perplexing to outside observers, given America's military dominance on the world stage.

Abernethy said part of their success could be related to cohesion developed from units sticking together for several years. U.S. troops tend to be on the move every few years.

"It might have to do with tenure and that is something we at the U.S. Army should look at," he said.

Some European units also perform special training specifically for the competitions. "That's not typically what we in the U.S. Army do," he said.

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NATION

Bahamas hit with Category 5 winds

By RAMON ESPINOSA
Associated Press

McLEAN'S TOWN CAY, Bahamas — Hurricane Dorian struck the northern Bahamas on Sunday as a catastrophic Category 5 storm, its 185 mph winds ripping off roofs and tearing down power lines as hundreds hunkered in schools, churches and other shelters.

The second-strongest Atlantic hurricane since 1950, Dorian hit land in Elbow Cay in the Abaco Islands after authorities made last-minute pleas for those in low-lying areas to evacuate. But officials recognized there were not many structures on higher ground on the largely flat archipelago southeast of Florida.

Millions from Florida to the Carolinas kept a wary eye on the slow-moving Dorian amid indications it would veer sharply northeastward after passing the Bahamas and track up the U.S. Southeast seaboard. But authorities warned that even if its core did not make U.S. landfall and stayed offshore, the potent storm would likely hammer U.S. coastal areas with powerful winds and heavy surf.

The National Hurricane Center in Miami said Dorian's maximum sustained winds at its 12:45 p.m. landfall were 185 mph, up from 175 mph. It was moving west at 7 mph. "Catastrophic conditions" are occurring in The Abaco Islands and expected across Grand Bahama later in the day, the center said.

Dorian's power was second only to Hurricane Allen in 1980, with its 190 mph winds.

"It's going to be really, really bad for the Bahamas," Colorado State University hurricane researcher Phil Klotzbach said.

In the northern stretches of the Bahamas archipelago, hotels closed, residents boarded up homes and officials hired boats to move people to bigger islands as Dorian approached.

Bahamas Prime Minister Hu-



PHOTOS BY RAMON ESPINOSA/AP

A man stands on a store's roof as he works to prepare it for the arrival of Hurricane Dorian in Freeport, on Grand Bahama, Bahamas, Sunday. The hurricane intensified yet again Sunday to a Category 5 as it closed in on the northern Bahamas.

bert Minnis warned that any "who do not evacuate are placing themselves in extreme danger and can expect a catastrophic consequence."

Still, dozens of people ignored evacuation orders, officials said, and they were warned that they were placing their lives in danger.

"The end could be fatal. We ask you, we beg you, we plead with you to get to a place of safety."

Samuel Butler
assistant police commissioner

we plead with you to get to a place of safety."

Bahamas radio station ZNS Bahamas reported that a mother and her child in central Grand Bahama called to say they were sheltering in a closet and seeking help from police.

Silbert Mills, owner of the Bahamas Christian Network, said trees and power lines were torn down in The Abaco Islands and some roads were impassable.

"The winds are howling like we've never, ever experienced before," said Mills, 59, who planned



Yolande Rolle puts sandbags at her shop's doorstep in Freeport as the storm closes in.

to ride out the hurricane with his family in the concrete home he built 41 years ago in central Abaco.

Among those refusing to leave were 32 people in Sweetings Cay, and a group that sought safety in Old Bahama Bay resort, which officials said was not safe.

Butler said officials were closing certain roads with heavy equipment and warned that those on the other side would be stranded until after Dorian has passed. The government has opened 14 shelters across the Bahamas.

"We cannot stress the amount of devastation and catastrophic

impact that Hurricane Dorian is expected to bring," said Shavonne Moxey-Bonamy, the Bahamas chief meteorologist.

On Saturday, small skiffs shuttled between outlying fishing communities and McLean's Town, a settlement of a few dozen homes at the eastern end of Grand Bahama island, about 150 miles from Florida's Atlantic coast. Most came from Sweetings Cay, a fishing town of a few hundred about 5 feet above sea level.

"We're not taking no chances," said Margaret Bassett, a ferry boat driver for the Deep Water Cay resort. "They said evacuate,

you have to evacuate."

But Jack Pittard, 76, an American who has been traveling to the Bahamas for 40 years, said he has decided to ride out the storm in The Abaco Islands. He said it's the first hurricane he will experience in his life.

"There's fear," he said by phone Sunday as it approached. "I'm worried about destruction of property, but I don't believe there's going to be loss of lives here."

Pittard said he battened up his house and is spending the storm in a nearby duplex behind a group of cottages owned by a friend. He noted the ocean is quite deep near where he's staying, and there's a cay that provides protection, so he doesn't expect significant storm surge.

"I'm not afraid of dying here," said Pittard, who lives in Lexington, Ky.

Meanwhile, Klotzbach, the hurricane researcher, warned of Dorian's catastrophic strength: "Abaco is going to get wiped."

Over two or three days, the slow-moving hurricane could dump as much as 4 feet of rain, unleash devastating winds and whip up a dangerous storm surge, said private meteorologist Ryan Mauw, seconding some of the most reliable computer models.

Government spokesman Kevin Harris said Dorian was expected to affect 73,000 residents and 21,000 homes.

Find out the best installations in the Pacific, chosen by your fellow Stars and Stripes readers!



WHO IS THE BEST OF 2019?



NATION

Death toll in West Texas rampage rises to 7

By PAUL J. WEBER
AND JAKE BLEIBERG
Associated Press

MIDLAND, Texas—The death toll in a West Texas shooting rampage increased to seven Sunday as authorities investigated why a man stopped by state troopers for failing to signal a left turn opened fire on them and fled, shooting more than 20 people as he drove before being killed by officers outside a movie theater.

Odessa police spokesman Steve LeSueur said that at least one person who was shot remained in life-threatening condition.

Those killed ranged in age from 15 to 57, Odessa Police Chief Michael Gerke said at a news conference. He said authorities have no definitive answers yet about a motive in Saturday's shooting.

He also refused to say the name of the gunman publicly but said he would provide his identity later. Authorities have said only that the shooter was a white male in his 30s.

The shooting began Saturday afternoon with an interstate traffic stop in which gunfire was exchanged with police, setting off a chaotic rampage during which the suspect hijacked a mail carrier truck and fired at random as he drove in the area of Odessa and Midland, two cities in the heart of Texas oil country more than 300 miles west of Dallas.

Police initially reported possible multiple shooters, but Odessa police Chief Michael Gerke later said there was only one male suspect.

The suspect shot "at innocent civilians all over Odessa," according to a statement from Odessa police.

The terrifying chain of events began when Texas state troopers tried pulling over a gold car mid-Saturday afternoon on Interstate 20 for failing to signal a left turn, Texas Department of Public Safety spokeswoman Katherine Cesinger said. Before the vehicle came to a complete stop, the driver "pointed a rifle toward the rear window of his car and fired several shots" toward the patrol car stopping him. The gunshots struck one of two troopers inside the patrol car, Cesinger said, after which the gunman fled and continued shooting.

Two other police officers were shot before the suspect was killed. Authorities say the trooper was in serious but stable condition on Saturday, and the other officers were stable.

Gerke said there were at least 21 civilian shooting victims. At least two patients remained in critical condition at Odessa Regional Medical Center, while oth-

"I looked over my shoulder to the left ... the man was there and he had a very large gun and it was pointing at me."

Shauna Saxton
witness



MARK ROGERS, ODESSA (TEXAS) AMERICAN/AP

A man prays outside the Medical Center Hospital emergency room in Odessa, Texas, on Saturday following a shooting rampage in the area of Odessa and Midland.



JACY LEWIS, REPORTER-TELEGRAM (MIDLAND, TEXAS)/AP

Odessa police officers park their vehicle outside Music City Mall in Odessa on Saturday as they investigate following the deadly shooting spree.



SUE OGROCKI/AP

An Odessa police car, left, and a U.S. mail vehicle, right, which were involved in Saturday's shooting are shown outside the Cineray entertainment center in Odessa on Sunday.

ers were hospitalized elsewhere.

Witnesses described gunfire near shopping plazas and in busy intersections.

Shauna Saxton was driving with her husband and grandson in Odessa and had paused at a stoplight when they heard loud pops.

"I looked over my shoulder to the left and the gold car pulled up and the man was there and he had a very large gun and it was pointing at me," she told TV station KO5A.

Saxton said she was trapped because there were two cars in front of her.

"I started honking my horn.

I started swerving and we got a little ahead of him and then for whatever reason the cars in front of me kind of parted," she said, sobbing. She said she heard three more shots as she sped away.

Gerke did not go into detail about the chase, but the movie theater where the suspect was killed is more than 10 miles from where state troopers originally pulled over the gunman.

The shooting comes just four weeks after a gunman in the Texas border city of El Paso killed 22 people after opening fire at a Walmart. Texas Gov. Greg Abbott last week held two meetings with lawmakers about how to prevent more mass shootings in Texas. He said he would visit the area Sunday.

The investigation into another mass shooting in Texas is unfolding as a number of looser gun laws in the state took effect Sunday. They were signed by Abbott during this year's legislative session that was praised by the National Rifle Association and followed

a 2017 mass shooting at a Texas church that killed more than two dozen people and a 2018 attack at a high school near Houston that left 10 dead.

Abbott, a Republican, has been noncommittal about pushing for new gun restrictions after the El Paso attack.

Saturday's shooting brings the number of mass killings in the U.S. so far this year to 25, matching the number in all of 2018, according to The AP/USA Today/Northeastern University mass murder database. The number of people killed this year has already reached 142, surpassing the 140 people who were killed in all of last year. The database tracks homicides where four or more people are killed, not including the offender.

Dustin Fawcett said he was sitting in his truck at a Starbucks in Odessa when he heard at least six gunshots ring out less than 50 yards behind him.

He spotted a white sedan with a passenger window that had been

shattered. That's when he thought, "Oh man, this is a shooting."

Fawcett, 28, an Odessa transportation consultant, "got out to make sure everyone was safe" but found that no one nearby had been struck by the gunfire. He said a little girl was bleeding, but she hadn't been shot, and that he later found out she was grazed in the face.

President Donald Trump has offered contradictory messages in reacting to recent mass shootings. Days after the El Paso shooting, he said he was eager to implement "very meaningful background checks" on guns and told reporters there was "tremendous support" for action. He later backed away, saying the current system of background checks was "very, very strong."

On Sunday, Trump reiterated his more recent calls for greater attention to mental health. Trump has said new facilities are needed for the mentally ill to reduce mass shootings.

NATION

New tariffs take effect; likely to raise US prices

By CHRISTOPHER RUGABER
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — The United States and China went ahead with their latest tariff increases on each other's goods Sunday, potentially raising prices Americans pay for some clothes, shoes, sporting goods and other consumer items in advance of the holiday shopping season.

The 15% U.S. taxes apply to about \$112 billion of Chinese imports. All told, more than two-thirds of the consumer goods the United States imports from China now face higher taxes.

The administration had largely avoided hitting consumer items in its earlier rounds of tariff increases.

With prices of many retail goods now likely to rise, the Trump administration's move threatens the U.S. economy's main driver: consumer spending. As businesses pull back on investment spending and exports slow in the face of weak global growth, American shoppers have been a key bright spot for the economy.

As a result of Trump's higher tariffs, many U.S. companies have warned that they will be forced to pass on to their customers the higher prices they will

pay on Chinese imports. Some businesses, though, may decide in the end to absorb the higher costs rather than raise prices for their customers.

In China, authorities began charging higher duties on American imports at midday Sunday, according to employees who answered the phone at customs offices in Beijing and the southern port of Guangzhou. They declined to give their names.

Tariffs of 10% and 5% apply to items ranging from frozen sweet corn and pork liver to marble and bicycle tires, the government announced earlier.

After Sunday's tariff increase, 87% of textiles and clothing the United States buys from China and 52% of shoes will be subject to import taxes.

On Dec. 15, the Trump administration is scheduled to impose a second round of 15% tariffs — this time on roughly \$160 billion of imports. If those duties take effect, virtually all goods imported from China will be covered.

The Chinese government has released a list of American imports targeted for penalties on Dec. 15 if the U.S. tariff increases take effect. In total, Beijing says Sunday's penalties and the planned December increases will



TERRY CHEN/AP

Jennifer Lee, whose family owns Footprint shoe store in San Francisco, stands by a wall of athletic shoes, many of which are made in China and will be subject to new U.S. tariffs on Chinese goods that started Sunday.

apply to \$75 billion of American goods.

Washington and Beijing are locked in a war over U.S. complaints that China steals U.S. trade secrets and unfairly subsidizes its own companies in its drive to develop global competitors in such high-tech industries as artificial intelligence and electric cars.

To try to force Beijing to reform its trade practices, the Trump administration has imposed import taxes on billions of dollars' worth of Chinese imports, and China has retaliated with tariffs on U.S. exports.

Trump has insisted that China pays the tariffs. In fact, eco-

nomics research has concluded that the costs of the duties fall on U.S. businesses and consumers. Trump had indirectly acknowledged the tariffs' impact by delaying some of the duties until Dec. 15, after holiday goods are already on store shelves.

A study by J.P. Morgan found that Trump's tariffs will cost the average U.S. household \$1,000 a year. That study was done before Trump raised the Sept. 1 and Dec. 15 tariffs to 15% from 10%.

The president has also announced that existing 25% tariffs on a separate group of \$250 billion of Chinese imports will increase to 30% on Oct. 1.

That cost could weaken an already slowing U.S. economy. Though consumer spending grew last quarter at its fastest pace in five years, the overall economy expanded at just a modest 2% annual rate, down from a 3.1% rate in the first three months of the year.

The economy is widely expected to slow further in the months ahead as income growth slows, businesses delay expansions and higher prices from tariffs depress consumer spending. Companies have already reduced investment spending, and exports have dropped against a backdrop of slower global growth.

Justice Ginsburg: 'On my way' to good health

By JESSICA GRESKO
Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg said Saturday she's "alive" and on her way to being "very well" following radiation treatment for cancer.

Ginsburg, 86, made the comments at the Library of Congress National Book Festival in Washington. The event came a little over a week after Ginsburg disclosed that she had completed three weeks of outpatient radiation therapy for a cancerous tumor on her pancreas and is now disease-free.

It is the fourth time over the past two decades that Ginsburg, the leader of the court's liberal wing, has been treated for cancer. She had colorectal cancer in 1999, pancreatic cancer in 2009 and lung cancer surgery in December.

Both liberals and conservatives watch the health of the court's oldest justice closely because it's understood the Supreme Court would shift right for decades if Republican President Donald Trump were to get the ability to nominate someone to replace her.

On Saturday, Ginsburg, who came out with the book "My Own Words" in 2016, spoke to an audience of more than 4,000 at Washington's convention center.

Near the beginning of an hourlong talk, her interviewer, NPR reporter Nina Totenberg,



CLIFF OWEN/AP

Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg speaks at the Library of Congress National Book Festival in Washington on Saturday

said: "Let me ask you a question that everyone here wants to ask, which is: How are you feeling? Why are you here instead of resting up for the term? And are you planning on staying in your current job?"

"How am I feeling? Well, first, this audience can see that I am alive," Ginsburg said to applause and cheers.

The comment was a seeming reference to the fact that when she was recuperating from lung cancer surgery earlier this year, some doubters demanded photographic proof that she was still living.

Ginsburg went on to say that she was "on my way" to being "very well."

As for her work on the Supreme Court, which is on its summer break and begins hearing arguments again Oct. 7, Ginsburg said she will "be prepared when the time comes."

Ginsburg, who was appointed by Democratic President Bill Clinton in 1993, did not directly answer how long she plans to stay on the court. Earlier this summer, however, she reported a conversation she had with former Justice John Paul Stevens, who retired from the court in 2010 at age 90. Ginsburg said she told Stevens: "My dream is to remain on the court as long as you did."

Stevens responded: "Stay longer." He died in July at age 99.

Ginsburg said Saturday that she loves her job. "It's the best and the hardest job I've ever had," she said. "It has kept me going through four cancer bouts."

"Instead of concentrating on my aches and pains, I just know that I have to read this set of briefs, go over the draft opinion. So I have to somehow surmount whatever is going on in my body and concentrate on the court's work."

Ginsburg's appearance Saturday was not her first following her most recent cancer announcement. Earlier last week she spoke at an event at the University at Buffalo, where she also accepted an honorary degree.

2 dozen are injured at music festival

Associated Press

SEATTLE — Officials said more than two dozen people were injured when a stage barricade collapsed during a performance at a Seattle music festival, although no one was seriously hurt.

Seattle Fire Department spokesman David Cuerpo told news outlets that about 25 people were evaluated for injuries after the 4-foot-high steel barricade collapsed Saturday night at the Seattle Center, which was playing host to the weekend's Bumbershoot Music & Arts Festival. Electronic music artist Jai Wolf was performing at the time.

Four people were hospitalized with minor injuries.

Cuerpo said members of the crowd of around 3,000 people were pressed against the barrier, causing it to fall. Wolf canceled the rest of his set.

The festival said in a statement that on-site medical teams assisted those injured.

NATION

Some Americans choose to play political tourist

By LAURA HUGHES
The Washington Post

Art Esquibel's first real vacation in 15 years was not spent enjoying sunset walks along the beach, by the pool or camel rides in the desert.

The businessman, 65, from Albuquerque, N.M., chose instead to spend it at the annual Iowa State Fair in Des Moines, where he set up a camping chair in a field to watch Democratic presidential candidates deliver their pitches.

Esquibel is just one of a number of Democrats playing political tourist, choosing to spend their summer breaks in the company of their party's presidential candidates.

"I haven't had time off in years, and I took six days to go see the candidates up close," he said in an interview. "I don't think I've taken six days off in 15 years."

But given next year's "critical election," Esquibel said, it was important for him to try to get up close with the candidates and make an informed choice in the primaries.

Candidates are spending millions of dollars to impress voters in the first two states to make their choices in the presidential primary season — Iowa and New Hampshire. The candidates gather in those states during summer, making those locales ideal for political tourists to witness a part of the highly contested race.

Iowa, which kicks off the primary season with caucuses scheduled for early February, is hosting the Democratic candidates in appearances across the state, all delivering impassioned speeches as they try to prove themselves best



MELINA MARA/The Washington Post

Sen. Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts meets voters at the fair in Des Moines, Iowa, on Aug. 10 as she pursues the Democratic presidential nomination.

suited to take on President Donald Trump in 2020.

For years, the Iowa fair has attracted such candidates almost magnetically and, because of that, has also attracted voters seeking to vet their politicians, eat fried food and enjoy the other exhibits on offer, including the famous 600-pound cow made of butter.

"I'm a political guy, and the state fair was a chance to see the candidates in a very personal way. Next year is crucial, and I wanted to hear them speak in an intimate setting," Esquibel said. "But I also had a holiday and a marvelous time."

His daughter Jennifer, 43, who is also from Albuquerque and has followed politics with him since she was 3, also took a couple of days off work, even missing her children's first day at school to

attend the fair. She said she was "heartened to see so much talent in the Democratic Party."

"It was really enjoyable. There was a core group of us travelers who were there just to hear the candidates," she said.

"Part of why I used my holiday to take this big action is because who we choose to stand against Trump is so critical," she said. "But it was also a unique opportunity to take a trip with my dad."

The fair attracted dedicated politicians and registered voters from across the globe.

Brian Fisher, 65, retired from Silicon Valley to Alicante, Spain, in 2018. Two weeks ago, he returned to the United States to attend the Iowa State Fair.

Fisher, who can use an absentee ballot next year to vote in the primaries, said the trip was in part

motivated by "patriotic duty" and also "fun."

Speaking afterward on the phone from Alicante, he said: "I thought this would be a great time to go as the election is next year and there are so many Democrats running."

"I thought this was a unique idea, but there were hardly any Iowans actually there. It was people from all over the country doing the same thing. I was very surprised."

"You formed a bit of a club, trading notes and stories," he said. "It made me feel better about my country because the people were so smart."

Fisher conceded that he had also enjoyed the fair's culinary delights, which included lots of fried food. "Horrible things like deep-fried bacon balls, all the

food your mom would never let you eat," he said.

New Hampshire is another key early state in the Democratic race — the first one to hold a primary, traditionally eight days after Iowa's caucuses — and one voter there said she had chosen to spend her entire summer vacation following Joe Biden's campaign as a volunteer.

Catherine Johnson, 59, a retiree, moved to Florida from New Hampshire two years ago. But she came home for the politics.

"I'm having the time of my life," she said while handing out campaign material at a Biden rally in Keene, N.H. "Right now, my job is handing out stickers. I did two events in Hanover yesterday, and I'm just working tirelessly."

"I actually just extended my summer vacation an extra month so I can continue to work on the campaign. I just think this is the most important election, and I'm seeing all of the candidates come through here. For me, at the moment, it's still got to be Joe Biden."

Because of the global ramifications of the election, international attention is being shored on the two relatively small states. Standing in the queue for a Biden rally in Keene was Gabriel Gouveia, 29, a Brazilian student at Keene State College who was as excited about the event as the registered Democrats around him and had traveled from New York.

"I am a Democrat by heart," Gouveia said. "Although this is an American presidential campaign, it will have an impact all over the world. I think it's very important we all follow this race closely."

House Dems in Trump districts resist pressure on impeachment

By EMILY DAVIES, RACHAEL BADE AND LAURA HUGHES
The Washington Post

CANTON, Mich. — Rep. Haley Stevens, an impeachment skeptic representing a Republican-leaning district, stood before a suddenly animated crowd of voters and heard deafening calls to oust President Donald Trump.

"The end of him!" one person shouted at a recent town hall in these suburbs west of Detroit. "Impeach him!" another demanded of the freshman Democrat who flipped a Michigan district that backed Trump in 2016.

But Stevens stood her ground, resisting the pleas. "We have got to have all the facts," she said, even as the promised vigorous oversight of the Republican president.

Much of the Democratic Party base, most of the 2020 presidential candidates and more than half the House Democratic Caucus endorse impeachment against Trump, casting the president as unfit for office. But a monthlong effort by liberal groups to rally support for forcing out the presi-

dent has fallen flat with perhaps the most critical group of Democrats: those representing Trump districts.

Of the 31 lawmakers from districts Trump won in 2016, only two — freshman Reps. Lauren Underwood, of Illinois, and Chris Pappas, of New Hampshire — have backed impeachment during the six-week-long congressional recess, according to an analysis by The Washington Post.

"People in my district are wanting us to pass bills, and they fear that if we go down this path of impeachment, we're not going to be working on the things that affect their lives, their pocketbooks, their kids," said freshman Rep. Elissa Slotkin, D-Mich., who represents a Trump district and has yet to back an impeachment inquiry.

The lack of movement among Trump-district Democrats is problematic for impeachment proponents: Senior Democrats have long considered such members to be a bellwether for broader impeachment sentiments. House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-Calif., has also resisted calls

for proceedings in part out of concern about political blowback on these very lawmakers who were crucial to delivering the House majority last year. It's one of the reasons outside groups like Indivisible organized this summer to put pressure on these Democrats, hopeful that by moving them, they'd move Pelosi, too.

Despite the fervor on the left, however, the positions of these Trump-district members reflect the general public. A recent Monmouth University, N.J., poll found 59% of Americans said Trump should not be impeached, while 35% said he should. The numbers are virtually the same as a June survey conducted before former special counsel Robert Mueller testified to Congress — and before liberal groups began their pressure campaign.

To be sure, the recent impeachment push has had some success. The Post analysis found that 35 House Democrats have backed launching an impeachment inquiry since Congress left Washington at the end of July. The movement also passed a major

threshold during the break, with a majority of House Democrats — 135 of the 235 — supporting a move to oust Trump.

"When I came out in favor of the impeachment inquiry, nobody was arguing that it was a really smart political move. But it's moved much quicker than I thought it would," said Rep. Sean Casten, D-Ill., a swing-district freshman who backs impeachment proceedings.

However, most of those new converts hail from safe Democratic districts or are facing primary challenges from the left. "I think it's the only time I've gotten a standing ovation at a town hall!" exclaimed Rep. Ro Khanna, a liberal California Democrat who endorsed impeachment during the recess.

The growing number of impeachment backers is sure to increase the pressure on House Democratic leadership this fall. Pelosi, in a recent call, told lawmakers that "the public isn't there on impeachment" and asked those who want proceedings to give her space.

"Give me the leverage I need to

make sure that we're ready and it is as strong as it can be," Pelosi said at the a conference call, according to an aide familiar with the remark. "The equities we have to weigh are our responsibility to protect and defend the Constitution and to be unifying and not dividing. But if and when we act, people will know we gave us no choice."

When lawmakers return to Washington Sept. 9, all eyes will be on members like Stevens and Slotkin, the latter of whom said she expects to make a decision about impeachment in mid- to late September. Slotkin plans to consult her colleagues from similarly moderate districts, a group she calls "the Gang of 10." The members, who keep touch regularly via group text, have a dinner date set for the first night they are back in Washington, she said.

Based on more than a dozen town halls either attended or watched online by The Post, House Democrats certainly faced an uptick in voter questions on impeachment this summer.

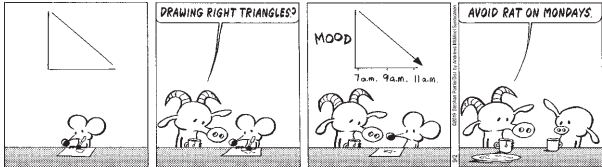
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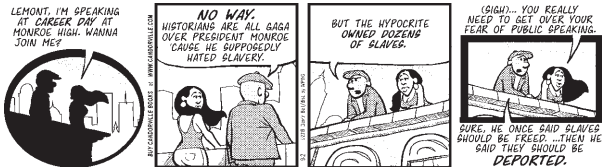
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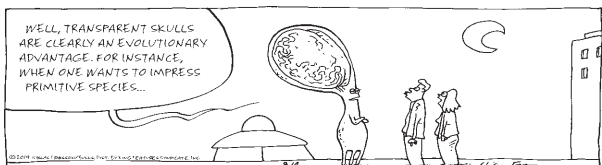
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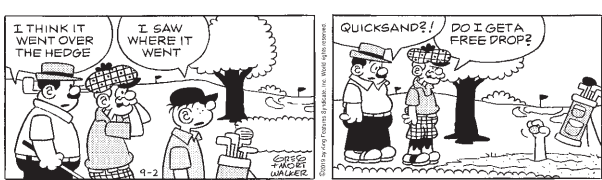
Candorville



Carpe Diem



Beetle Bailey



Bizarro



Eugene Sheffer Crossword

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11			12		13			14			
15					16			17			
18				19			20		21		
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				44		45		46		47	48
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56					57				58		
59					60					61	

ACROSS

- Chi follower
- Priestly garment
- Soccer star Mia
- Portnoy's creator
- Hide-hair insert
- Sicilian volcano
- Fashion magazine
- One of us
- Old Testament book
- Rice recipe
- Shoelace snarl
- B&O and others
- Arboreal apes
- "War of the Worlds" invader
- January, to Juana
- Location
- Roofing goo
- Plumbing problem
- Shoelace product
- Snow clerics
- Cowboy's seat
- "The Bells" author
- Email command
- 46 Witch craft?
- Too
- Expected
- Dell
- Bistro handout
- Choose
- Heart charts (Abbr.)

DOWN

- Get ready, briefly
- Songs for one
- "— do for now"
- Whatever number
- Take a gander
- "Treasure" singer Mars
- Instructions for cooking leftovers
- \$ dispenser
- L-P link
- More (Sp.)
- Classic Hoagy
- Carmichael song
- Calendar abbr.
- Tram load
- Perched
- Sleuth Wolfe
- Smile
- Soaks (up)
- Atlas pages
- Met melody
- Peruse
- Snooze
- Knock
- Flamenco cheer
- Steal from
- Fund
- Hoodwink
- First melody acorns
- "Three Sisters" sister
- 49 GI dining hall
- 50 Early hrs.
- 1 Gypsy Rose —
- 52 NBC show since 1975
- 54 UFO pilots

Answer to Previous Puzzle

S	T	U	B	S	R	E	C	A	P		
I	N	A	P	E	T		A	T	O	N	A
B	O	N	S	A	I		C	A	N	O	L
E	O	N		T	R	A	C	T		R	O
A	P	E	D		S	R	O		R	A	M
M	Y	R	R	H		M	O	L	O	K	A
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J	A	I	A	L	A	I		M	I	N	I
A	D	A	M		R	P	M		N	E	C
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E	R	R	A	T	A		M	U	M	B	A
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S	E	A	T	S			A	L	B	E	E

9-2

CRYPTOQUIP

UXHMINVNB CXBW OXIOBT
UH U KHUHV MQ MQ UQ
MCCVLVUV WVQB NBHJBBQ
HJM LMXQHSVBK: NMSTBS
OBHSMW.

Saturday's Cryptoquip: MARGARINE OR MAYO THAT'S APPROXIMATELY HALFWAY TOWARD ITS EXPIRATION DATE: MIDDLE-AGE SPREAD.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals L

SCIENCE



STEPHANIE DeMARCO, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

Above: This dire wolf tooth was examined by Larisa DeSantis and her colleagues at the La Brea Tar Pits and Museum in California as part of a study published last month in the journal *Current Biology*. **Right:** Aisling Farrell is a collections manager for Rancho La Brea.



MARCUS YAM, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

Bone study shows perils of being a picky eater

By STEPHANIE De MARCO
Los Angeles Times

NARROW rows of shallow gray bins tower to the ceiling. Resting inside are the jaw bones of saber-toothed cats and ancient coyotes that perished in the La Brea Tar Pits as many as 40,000 years ago.

"The original Angelenos," said Aisling Farrell, a collections manager at Rancho La Brea in California. "Everything that we have lived and died here, or at least migrated through here and died here."

Multiple species of saber-toothed cats went extinct about 10,000 years ago while coyotes survived — becoming the apex predators famous for terrorizing family pets. The reason why, argues new research based on the La Brea fossils, was the coyote's superior ability to adapt to a changing world.

From about 15,000 to 10,000 years ago — the end of the Pleistocene epoch — a warming climate, the increasing encroachment of humans or some combination of both led to a massive extinction of some of North America's largest mammals.

By asking how the survivors responded to the loss of the larger carnivores, said Vanderbilt University paleontologist Larisa DeSantis, "we can begin to understand what the effects of past impacts of climate change and human effects were in these ecosystems and extract out important cautionary tales and lessons of relevance to conservation today."

For example, she asked, "Did the diets of cougars and wolves and coyotes change in a substantial way once extinction of these other animals occurred? And in what way did that actually happen?"

With more than 3.5 million fossils representing more than 600 different species, the La Brea Tar Pits would likely hold the answers.

"If you're going to study Pleistocene carnivores, you go to La Brea," DeSantis said. An ancient tar seep in the middle of modern-day Los Angeles, the La Brea Tar Pits trapped all sorts of animals over the past 50,000 years. It's one of the most valuable sites for paleontologists studying both the causes and consequences of species extinctions.

Unwitting herbivores like American bison or giant ground sloths that accidentally wandered into the sticky trap would



STEPHANIE DeMARCO, THE LOS ANGELES TIMES/TNS

Fossil jaws of saber-toothed cats, left, and ancient coyotes, right, are studied at the museum. Multiple species of saber-toothed cats went extinct 10,000 years ago.

cry out for help, attracting the attention of predators — dire wolves, coyotes, saber-toothed cats and the rare American lion — looking for an easy snack. Those predators would inevitably become stuck themselves.

To understand how those predators adapted to the changing prey availability and the loss of other predators, DeSantis and her collaborators looked for clues hidden in their teeth: both the chemical composition of the enamel and the physical scrapes left on the surface.

"Everything you eat is incorporated into your tissues," DeSantis said. "The great thing about teeth is that the signal is locked in at the time those teeth mineralize."

Tooth enamel is laid down in adolescence, so it provides a snapshot of what an animal was eating during its young adult life.

Drilling into the tooth, the researchers removed 1 to 2 milligrams of enamel — an amount comparable to about three grains of sugar.

Team members from Vanderbilt and New York State Museum in Albany then used mass spectrometry to measure the relative abundance of different isotopes of carbon in the enamel from ancient and

modern-day carnivores.

Teeth with a higher ratio of carbon-13 to carbon-12 indicate that their owner ate prey that lived in open grassy areas. Teeth with a lower ratio signal the carnivore hunted in more covered, forested areas.

The reason for this difference is that plants that grow in these environments do photosynthesis slightly differently, leading to distinctive ratios of carbon-13 and carbon-12. Herbivores that eat the plants incorporate their ratio of carbon isotopes into their bodies, as do the carnivores further up the food chain.

According to the carbon isotope ratios, saber-toothed cats preferred to hunt in sheltered groves.

"It makes sense then that an ambush predator would be catching more prey in a more covered area than in an open plain," said Julie Meachen, a paleontologist from Des Moines University in Iowa who was not involved in the research.

Ancient coyotes, on the other hand, hunted in open areas. But after larger predators died out, coyotes began catching prey in more forested areas, their tooth enamel revealed.

This shift was even clearer when the researchers looked at the physical wear and

tear on the animals' teeth.

Using a technique called dental microwear texture analysis, "we scan that surface in three dimensions, much like a topographic map," DeSantis said.

Peter Ungar, a paleoanthropologist at the University of Arkansas and the inventor of dental microwear texture analysis, explained that foods leave characteristic marks on the teeth.

If the predator is eating "the organs and the meat but not the bone, then they should have microwear dominated by fine parallel scratches," he said. But if they are eating a lot of bone, they'll have "a lot of pits on their teeth."

The researchers found that before the Pleistocene extinction, both saber-toothed cats and coyotes were chowing down on the fleshy, meaty parts of their prey.

But teeth from coyotes found in the tar pits after the Pleistocene extinction were much more pitted and complex, indicating that they had shifted to a more scavenging behavior — a characteristic of coyotes alive today. (Sure enough, the teeth of modern-day coyotes were also quite pitted.)

In other words, DeSantis said, the animals "were able to adapt."

The findings were published last month in the journal *Current Biology*.

"It's a really interesting study," said Ungar, who praised the team for using multiple types of evidence to make their case. "I think that's the future of this kind of work."

It's not yet clear why the saber-toothed cats and dire wolves couldn't adjust to the changing ecosystem as well as the coyotes did. Perhaps those larger predators had become too specialized, DeSantis said. "If you are smaller, if you are a generalist, if you are opportunistic, you have a better chance at surviving," she said.

Understanding the coyotes' response to the disappearance of large predators will guide researchers as they think about how other species might react to future extinction events.

When building models for how species could change in response to climate change and human population growth, "you have to make the assumption that what the animal does today, an animal will do tomorrow," DeSantis said. "But as we've learned from the coyotes, that's not always the case."

WORLD

UK Labour Party to seek another Brexit extension

Associated Press

LONDON — The U.K. Labour Party's chief Brexit adviser says opposition plans to block a "no-deal" Brexit will require another extension to Article 50 so the Oct. 31 deadline doesn't take effect.

Keir Starmer told the BBC on Sunday that the legislation to be introduced in Parliament will focus on an extension of the deadline to prevent Prime Minister Boris Johnson from leaving the European Union without a deal.

He says the length of the extension is "secondary" because the top priority is preventing a disorderly departure on Oct. 31.

Current plans call for Britain to leave the EU on that date unless Britain formally asks for an extension and each of the bloc's other 27 nations agree.

Britain's Parliament has only a short time to deal with the situation. Prime Minister Boris Johnson plans to suspend Parliament for part of the time during the run-up to the Brexit deadline.

Cabinet minister Michael Gove, who is heading up "no-deal" preparations, declined Sunday to commit the government to following Parliament's lead. Asked if the government would adhere to legislation that might be passed that would block a disorderly exit, he said, "Let's see what the legislation says."

He said he would "wait to see" the details of any opposition plan. Johnson and his top advisers are planning to meet with recalcitrant legislators from his own Conservative Party to try to keep them from supporting the opposition's efforts to prevent "no-deal."

The issue is expected to dominate debate when Parliament convenes Tuesday after a lengthy summer recess.

Saudi-led airstrikes kill at least 60 at rebel-run prison

By AHMED AL-HAJ
AND SAMY MAGDY

Associated Press

SANAA, Yemen — The Saudi-led coalition fighting Yemen's rebels attacked a detention center in the southwestern province of Dhamar with several airstrikes Sunday, killing at least 60 people and wounding several dozen, officials and the rebels' health ministry said.

The attack was the deadliest so far this year by the coalition, which has faced international criticism for airstrikes that have killed civilians and hit nonmilitary targets.

Yemeni officials said Sunday's strikes targeted a college in the city of Dhamar, which the rebels, known as Houthis, were using as a detention center. The coalition denied it had struck a lockup, saying it had targeted a military site.

"We were sleeping, and around midnight there were many, many three, or four, or six strikes. They were targeting the jail; I really don't know the strike numbers," wounded detainee Nazem Saleh said while on a stretcher in a local hospital. He said the International Committee of the Red Cross had visited the center two times before the airstrike.

Youssef al-Hadri, a spokesman for the Houthi-run Health Ministry, said at least seven airstrikes hit three buildings in the complex overnight.

The ICRC, which inspects detention centers as part of its global mission, said it had visited the site in the past.

Former detainees, meanwhile, said the Houthis had also used the site in the past to store and repair weapons.

On Sunday, Sweden's foreign minister was holding talks in Jordan, part of her efforts to re-launch negotiations after years of stalemate between the warring sides. Saudi Arabia intervened on behalf of the internationally recognized government in March 2015 after the Iran-backed Houthis took the capital city. The conflict has claimed tens of thousands of lives, thrust millions to the brink of famine and spawned the world's most humanitarian crisis.

The rebels' health ministry said in a statement at least 60 people were killed in Sunday's airstrikes. Another 50 were wounded. It said rescue workers have been pulling bodies from the site.

The Saudi-led coalition said it had hit a Houthi military facility used as storage for drones and missiles in Dhamar, "in accordance with international humanitarian law."

It said "all precautionary measures were taken to protect civilians."

Abdul-Qader el-Murtaza, a rebel official, said dozens of captured government fighters were being held at the site.



KIN CHEUNG/AP

Pro-democracy protesters gather outside the airport in Hong Kong on Sunday.

Protesters block roads near Hong Kong airport and burn barricades

By VINCENT YU
AND KATIE TAM

Associated Press

HONG KONG — Anti-government protesters blocked roads near Hong Kong's airport with burning barricades and damaged a train station Sunday after a night of violent clashes with police.

Train and some bus service to the airport on the outlying island of Chek Lap Kok were suspended. Some passengers walked to the airport, one of Asia's busiest, carrying their luggage.

Hong Kong has been the scene of tense anti-government protests for nearly three months. The demonstrations began in response to a proposed extradition law and have expanded to include other grievances and demands for more democracy and the resignation of the semi-autonomous Chinese territory's leader.

The protests are an embarrassment to China's ruling Communist Party ahead of Oct. 1 celebrations of its 70th anniversary in power.

The protesters complain Beijing and the government of Hong Kong Chief Executive Carrie Lam are eroding the autonomy and civil liberties promised when the former British colony was returned to China in 1997.

On Sunday, the MTR Corp. suspended train service to the airport after several hundred protesters gathered there following calls online to disrupt transportation. They blocked buses arriving at the airport but police in riot helmets kept them out of the terminal.

The government said some protesters threw objects at police. It also said iron poles, bricks and rocks were thrown onto tracks of the airport train.

At least 26 flights from Hong Kong and 17 to the city had been canceled as of 7:55 p.m., the South



VINCENT YU/AP

Protesters set fire to road barriers at Tung Chung near the airport in Hong Kong on Sunday.

China Morning Post newspaper reported, citing information from the airport.

After protesters began to stream away from the airport in the late afternoon, some attacked a train station in the adjacent Tung Chung area. They used metal bars to smash lights and broke open a fire hose valve, sending water gushing across the floor.

Protesters set up barricades on two adjacent streets and set fire to some of them. Firefighters arrived a few minutes later to douse the blaze.

Protesters left the area after busloads of riot police in green fatigues with black helmets and riot shields flooded into the train station.

The Post reported that drivers of taxis and private cars on the toll road from the airport were picking up protesters to help them avoid arrest.

Passengers arriving downtown on a ferry from Lantau Island, where Tung Chung is located,

were being searched by police and asked for identity cards, the newspaper said.

The protests followed a night of violent clashes between protesters and police.

On Saturday, protesters threw gasoline bombs at government headquarters. Police stormed a subway car and hit passengers with clubs and pepper spray.

The protests erupted in early June in Hong Kong, where 7.4 million people were promised a "high degree of autonomy" under an agreement between Beijing and London.

Opponents saw the proposed extradition bill as an erosion of that "one country, two systems" framework. It would have allowed crime suspects to be sent to the mainland, where the Communist Party controls the court system.

Lam, the Hong Kong leader, suspended work on the law but protesters want it withdrawn completely. They also have called for Lam's resignation and democratic elections.

WORLD

At least 9 dead in Philippines plane crash

Associated Press

MANILA, Philippines — All nine people on board a small medical evacuation plane were killed Sunday when the aircraft crashed into a resort area south of the Philippine capital and exploded in flames, officials said.

The light plane crashed into a resort compound in Pansol village in Laguna province near the foothills of Mount Makiling. Police and rescuers retrieved nine bodies from the wreckage, police said. Two people on the ground were injured and brought to a hospital.

Eric Apolonio, a spokesman of the Civil Aviation Authority of the Philippines, said the light plane was on a medical evacuation flight from southern Dipolog city in Zamboanga del Norte province and disappeared from radar for

unknown reasons as it flew over Laguna, about 37 miles south of the capital. The plane was supposed to land in Manila.

The nine on board the plane included two pilots, two nurses, a doctor, a patient, the patient's wife and two other people, police said.

Videos posted online by witnesses showed flames and black smoke billowing from the private resort compound in Pansol, a district popular for its hot springs and swimming pools. Firefighters and an ambulance were seen near the scene of the crash as local officials asked villagers to step back to a safe distance.

The crash happened during the monsoon season, when fewer people visit Pansol's resorts compared to the hot summer months that ended in June.



PHILIPPINE RED CROSS/AP

Rescuers look at the site where a plane crashed in Laguna, south of Manila, Philippines, on Sunday.

Mysterious Iran rocket blast draws Trump tweet, Tehran taunt

By JON GAMBERLL
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates — The unexplained explosion of a rocket at an Iranian space center grew more mysterious Sunday as President Donald Trump tweeted what appeared to be an American surveillance photo of the site and Tehran showed off a satellite meant to be launched.

Trump's tweet showing the aftermath of Thursday's explosion at the Imam Khomeini Space Center drew a taunting tweet from Iran's Information and Communications Technology Minister Mohammad Javad Azari Jahromi. However, Jahromi declined to say what went wrong while showing local journalists the Nahid-1 satellite meant to be launched.

"I have no idea about the Americans' comment about Seman space site and I think it is more appropriate that the respected minister of defense talk about this because it is within his realm of responsibility," the minister said. "But what could be seen today is that the Nahid satellite is here and has not yet been handed over."

Thursday's explosion marked the third failure involving a launch at the center, which has raised suspicions of sabotage in

Iran's space program. The U.S. has criticized the initiative as a way for Tehran to advance its ballistic missiles.

Trump directly acknowledged that in his tweet Friday.

"The United States of America was not involved in the catastrophic accident during final launch preparations for the Safir SLV Launch at Seman Launch Site One in Iran," Trump wrote, identifying the rocket used. "I wish Iran best wishes and good luck in determining what happened at Site One."

Commercially available satellite images by Planet Labs Inc. and Maxar Technologies showed a black plume of smoke rising above a launch pad Thursday, with what appeared to be the charred remains of a rocket and its launch stand. In previous days, satellite images had shown officials there repainted the launch pad blue.

The photo released Friday by Trump appeared to be a once-classified surveillance photo from American intelligence agencies. Analysts said the black rectangle in the photo's upper-left-hand corner likely covered up the photo's classification.

The image showed damaged vehicles around the launch pad, as well as damage done to the rocket's launcher. It also clearly showed a large phrase written in Farsi

on the pad: "National Product, National Power."

Trump, later speaking to reporters, described Iran suffering "a big problem" at the space center.

"We had a photo and I released it, which I have the absolute right to do," Trump said. U.S. presidents can declassify information at their discretion.

Trump and American officials did not describe how the U.S. obtained the photograph. However, the image showed far greater detail than what commercial satellites have.

Judging from the angle the image was taken and the timing, analyst have suggested the photograph matched with the passing of an American spy satellite known as USA-224 over the area, which is believed to be a KH-11.

Jahromi, a rising politician in Iran's Shiite theocracy, responded to Trump in a tweet early Saturday with a selfie next to Iran's Nahid-1 at a lab in Tehran. The Nahid-1 is believed to be the satellite Iran was prepping to launch at the space center, which is some 150 miles southeast of Iran's capital, Tehran.

"Me & Nahid I right now, Good Morning Donald Trump!" he wrote in English.

Jahromi told The Associated Press in

July that Tehran planned three satellite launches this year, two for satellites that do remote-sensing work and another that handles communications.

The Nahid-1 is reportedly the telecommunications satellite. Nahid in Farsi means "Venus." The satellite, which had Iran's first foldable solar panels, was supposed to be in a low orbit around the Earth for some two-and-a-half months.

The apparent failed rocket launch comes after two failed satellite launches of the Payam and Doosti in January and February. A separate fire at the Imam Khomeini Space Center in February also killed three researchers, authorities said at the time.

Over the past decade, Iran has sent several short-lived satellites into orbit and in 2013 launched a monkey into space.

The U.S. alleges such satellite launches defy a U.N. Security Council resolution calling on Iran to undertake no activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

Iran, which long has said it does not seek nuclear weapons, maintains its satellite launches and rocket tests do not have a military component. Tehran also says it hasn't violated the U.N. resolution as it only "called upon" Tehran not to conduct such tests.

UN: India should ensure no one is left stateless

Associated Press

BERLIN — The top U.N. refugee official has urged India to ensure that no one is left stateless by the exclusion of nearly 2 million people from a citizenship list in Assam state.

Filippo Grandi, the U.N. high commissioner for refugees, voiced his concern in a statement issued Sunday in Geneva. He said that "any process that could leave large numbers of people without a nationality would be an enormous

blow to global efforts to eradicate statelessness."

He urged India to ensure no one ends up stateless, "including by ensuring adequate access to information, legal aid, and legal recourse in accordance with the highest standards of due process."

About 31.1 million people were included on the list, according to a statement Saturday from Assam's government, leaving out 1.9 million.



ANUPAM MATY/AP

Villagers walk on an embankment on their way to check names in the final list of the National Register of Citizens in the northeastern Indian state of Assam, on Saturday.

2 east German states hold elections as far-right gains

Associated Press

BERLIN — Two states in eastern Germany are holding elections that could bring big gains for a far-right party, further destabilize Chancellor Angela Merkel's national government and highlight continuing cracks in German unity nearly 30 years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Voters in Saxony, a region of around 4.1 million people bordering Poland and the Czech Republic, and neighboring Brandenburg, which has 2.5 million

inhabitants and surrounds Berlin, elect new state legislatures on Sunday.

The formerly communist east has become a stronghold for the 6-year-old Alternative for Germany, or AfD, which is hoping for a possible first-place finish in at least one state. Saxony has been governed since German reunification by Merkel's Christian Democratic Union and Brandenburg by the center-left Social Democrats, its partners in the national government.

AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Man to walk from NY stadium to Fenway

RI WARWICK — A Connecticut man is walking from Yankee Stadium to Fenway Park in an effort to promote peace, and not just between the two fan bases.

Al Forte, 76, of Stamford, Conn., told the Providence Journal he's asking people along the way to pray for peace on earth, handing out cards showing six soldiers praying.

Forte began his trek after a Red Sox-Yankees game on Aug. 4 and said he plans to arrive in Boston in time for a game between the two clubs Sept. 6.

He has a friend who picks him up each night and takes him to a hotel, then drives him back to where he left off in the morning to continue his journey.

Helpers to rebuild Santa's Workshop

MI ISHPERING — Santa's Workshop in the Upper Peninsula will be rebuilt after a devastating fire, thanks to the generosity of the public, especially a former Ishpeming resident with warm childhood memories.

The Mining Journal reported that Tim Easterwood, of suburban Detroit, is giving \$15,000 to rebuild the small structure.

Authorities said a fire last month probably was intentionally set.

The workshop has been open in Ishpeming on weekends between Thanksgiving and Christmas, giving families a place to visit Santa Claus. Holiday decorations stored inside the building were also destroyed.

High school and college students will rebuild the workshop and trailer.

Judge sides with protesting cheerleaders

ID BOISE — A federal judge has sided with a group of Idaho students who were removed from their high school cheerleading team after staging a protest of their coach.

The Idaho Statesman reported Wednesday that Judge David Nye ruled that the nine Burley High School cheerleaders had proved they were dismissed for reserving their right to engage in the Cassia County School District's grievance process.

The cheerleaders involved in the sit-in protest of their coach were suspended from the team.

A district spokeswoman said the ruling handled only part of the issue and the district is working toward a fair resolution.

Man denied entry to bar over chains sues

OR PORTLAND — A black man has filed a \$500,000 lawsuit against a Portland bar owner, claiming he was prevented from going inside in 2018 because he was wearing "too many" chains around his neck.

Ray Lamont Peterson claimed that was a pretext for keeping the



ROBERT F. BUKATY/AP

Taking in a break at the beach

April Niece, of Cars, New Brunswick, Canada, rides a wave Thursday near The Pier at Old Orchard Beach, Maine. The usually cold Atlantic Ocean has warmed up to a tolerable level just in time for Labor Day weekend.

Splash Bar predominantly white.

Peterson's lawsuit filed Aug. 12 claims that Chris Lenahan used a radio to tell security staff to start "arbitrarily enforcing a dress code against African Americans" when he thought the composition of customers was getting "too dark." The suit claims that Lenahan referred to black patrons using racist terms.

Lenahan told The Oregonian/OregonLive Tuesday that the lawsuit allegations are "ridiculous," and that he and his partners operate "the most diverse clubs" with "the most diverse clientele."

Oyster thefts hinder aquaculture program

MA SANDWICH — Officials in town said about 4,000 immature oysters were stolen from a local creek, hindering a fledgling Cape Cod aquaculture program.

The Cape Cod Times reported that Sandwich town officials realized the oysters were missing from Mill Creek when they went to check the floating cages near Sandwich Boardwalk last month.

Sandwich Natural Resources Director David DeConto said the oysters weren't mature enough to meet the size requirements for sale, so it's unclear why they were taken.

Sandwich had its first oyster harvest for licensed shellfisher-

THE CENSUS

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The number of stuffed animals a group donated to a Fairbanks, Alaska, hospital. Fairbanks Memorial Hospital welcomed teddy bears, giant plush horses and stuffed snowmen. They were delivered in a procession of classic cars. The benefit was part of the Vernon Nash Car Club's

annual car show, and members collected the toys. AdriAnne Pennington, nurse manager of pediatrics at the hospital, said the toys are given to young patients.

man in January after developing the program over several years.

Officials said there may be no harvest this year because of the theft.

Woman's 11th birthday has cupcakes, singers

NH SUNAPEE — A woman celebrated her 11th birthday in New Hampshire with a bunch of cupcakes and a tribute from singers.

Hazel Nilson was born Aug. 21, 1908, in Chicago. A lifelong Chicago Cubs fan, she likes to say she was born the last time the team won the World Series before their big comeback in 2016.

Nilson, a former physical education teacher, has been a resident of Sunapee Cove in Sunapee since October 2014. Before that, she lived in Stone Lake, Wis.

State awards first marijuana licenses

IL SPRINGFIELD — Illinois has awarded its first

licenses to businesses that will be allowed to sell recreational marijuana when it becomes legal in the state next year.

The Chicago Sun-Times reported regulators announced Thursday the five medical marijuana dispensaries where residents will be able to buy small amounts of the drug starting Jan. 1.

Three locations are in Chicago's suburbs: 3C Compassionate Care Centers in Joliet and Naperville and The Clinic Mundelein. The others are in central and southern Illinois: The Clinic Effingham and Saveo Health and Wellness in Canton.

School adds e-cig to 'no smoking' signs

NC GREENVILLE — North Carolina public schools have added a picture of an electronic cigarette to their "no smoking" signs.

News outlets reported all public schools in the state are required to have a sign posted stating they're a tobacco-free zone, but this year a symbol has been added to also

ban e-cigarette use, also called vaping.

Pitt County Health Department Coordinator Tiffany Thigpen told WNCN the state received money to add the symbol to the signs ahead of the new school year.

University exposed to whooping cough

GA GAINESVILLE — Students and employees at a Georgia university may have been exposed to pertussis, also known as whooping cough.

News outlets reported a news release on Wednesday from Brenau University says potential cases began the week of Aug. 16.

Georgia Department of Public Health District 2 spokesman Dave Palmer said the cases are probable but have not yet been confirmed. The number of possible cases hasn't been released.

Brenau University Director of Communications Kristen Bowman said students are required to get vaccinated, but employees don't have the same requirements. She said students and employees can get a booster shot at the school's Center for Health & Well-Being.

The college's vice president of student services, Amanda Lambers, said most students have been vaccinated and the risk of contracting the illness is low.

From wire reports

FACES

Jeopardy! host Trebek back at work after chemo

From wire reports

"Jeopardy!" host Alex Trebek announced in a video posted Aug. 29 that he has completed chemotherapy and has returned to work on the show's 36th season.

"I'm on the mend," he said, "and that's all I can hope for right now."

Trebek, 79, disclosed his late-stage pancreatic cancer diagnosis in March, when he addressed "Jeopardy!" viewers in his usual steady, comforting tone: "Now, normally, the prognosis for this is not very encouraging," he said at the time, "but I'm going to keep working, and with the love and support of my family and friends — and with the help of your prayers, also — I plan to beat the low-survival-rate statistics for this disease."

In May, he provided an update by telling People magazine that in a "mind-boggling" development, his body had responded well to chemotherapy. Some of his tumors had "already shrunk by more than 50 percent," he said, adding that doctors told him he was in "near remission."

Trebek has become a fixture in many American households over the years, as he began hosting the daily syndicated version of "Jeopardy!" in 1984. He has earned a Peabody Award and six Daytime Emmys, the latest one in May. The show, which will return Sept. 9, has aired more than 7,000 episodes in those 35 years.

As Trebek pointed out in the Aug. 29 video, "Jeopardy!" has recently experienced a surge in popularity due to the striking success of contestant James Holzhauer — known to fans as "Jeopardy James" — who came close to surpassing the earnings of "Jeopardy!" legend Ken Jennings.

At the end of the video, Trebek teased the upcoming season.

"We have some exciting things coming up, and I can't wait to share them with all of you," he said. "Let me tell you, it's going to be a good year."

Meek Mill, Trainor to play NFL pregame

Meek Mill and Meghan Trainor will help kick off the new social change partnership between the NFL and Jay-Z before the season-opening game in Chicago on Thursday night.

The NFL and Roc Nation announced Aug. 30 that Mill, Trainor and Rapsody will perform in a free pregame concert in Chicago's Grant Park before the Bears play the Green Bay Packers.

A portion of the performance will appear on pregame programs on NBC and the NFL Network.

The musicians also have been named advocates for the Inspire Change initiative meant to support various causes, including criminal justice reform and improving police relations and educational progress.

VENICE FILM FESTIVAL



'Marriage Story' felt fated for Johansson

By LINDSEY BAHR

Associated Press

When Noah Baumbach asked Scarlett Johansson to meet with him about a film he was going to write about a divorce, he didn't know she was going through one in real life.

"It felt fated in a way," Johansson said. "It came somehow at just the right time."

Johansson stars alongside Adam Driver in "Marriage Story," a Netflix film about a couple — she plays an actress and he plays a theater director — with an 8-year-old son managing a bi-coastal separation and divorce. It premiered Aug. 29 at the Venice Film Festival.

Although Johansson had her own experiences to draw on having most recently divorced French businessman Romain Dauriac in 2017, she said there was something of everyone behind the film in the brutally honest but tender character study.

Baumbach wrote the script know-

ing that Driver and Johansson would play the couple in question. He said he realized in the writing process that, "Through a divorce we could explore a marriage."

"Although they're coming apart, love always exists," he said. "It's in every scene, it's there."

One scene, in which the two leads have a particularly traumatic fight, had audiences at the Venice Film Festival buzzing. Driver said he didn't really analyze it afterward, but that it was two "pretty difficult" days. Baumbach added that it was "harrowing" and they'd often have to stop for a break, with the actors either going to their rooms or taking a walk around the block to regroup.

"They would run the whole scene almost every time. It was like watching two of the best athletes compete," Baumbach said. "In many ways it was one of the most rewarding experience I've had as a director."

The film hits theaters Nov. 6, followed by its Netflix debut Dec. 6.

Pitt goes deep into space, masculinity in 'Ad Astra'

By LINDSEY BAHR

Associated Press

"Ad Astra" looks and sounds like a space epic with a movie star lead in Brad Pitt, but there's a lot more going on beneath the surface.

Pitt said Aug. 29 at the Venice International Film Festival that he and director James Gray are really digging into the idea of masculinity.

"Having grown up in an era where you're taught to be strong and not show weakness ... there is a certain value in that but there's also a barrier that's created denying those pains or those things you feel ashamed to reveal," Pitt said. "I think we were asking the question: Is a better definition for us actually being more open divining a better relationship with your loved ones, with your parents, with your kids, and with yourself?"

"Ad Astra" follows Pitt's detached astronaut character Roy McBride on a journey to the outer reaches of space to find his estranged father, a famous astronaut himself who has long been thought dead.

In addition to starring, Pitt also produced the film which he said was one of the most challenging he's ever done. Not only did he and Gray use primarily practical sets, but it's an emotionally taxing role as well.

Pitt had to draw on personal pains to make his performance as honest as possible. Gray, who has been a friend of Pitt's for 25 years, would send him emails every day reveal-



Pitt

ing ideas from his own life that would help set the tone for whatever was needed for that particular day on set.

"We don't have a normal male relationship, we've always been quite open about our foibles and had big laughs at our embarrassing moments and (been) open about our feelings about our perceived failures or missteps," Pitt said. "It was a really unique experience."

"Ad Astra" had its world premiere at Venice. When asked about the film's Oscar prospects, Pitt, who has yet to win an Oscar for acting despite being nominated twice, deflected.

"Every year I see amazing talent getting acknowledged and amazing talent not getting acknowledged. And my feeling is when your number comes up it's great fun and when someone else's number comes up it's very fun to see," Pitt said. "How was that for a dodge?"

His focus is on finally releasing the film. "Ad Astra's" release date has been pushed back a few times, as Fox integrated its release schedule with Disney after the acquisition.

"I just want to get this film out," Pitt said. "It's a challenging film. It's subtle and it's operating on many cylinders and it has something to say about who we are, the soul, why we hang on, what's our purpose? I'm curious to see where it lands."

Scarlett Johansson poses for photographers at the photo call for the film "Marriage Story" at the Venice Film Festival on Aug. 29.

ARTHUR NOLA, INVISION/AP

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OPINION

Don't desert our Afghan partners

By RYAN CROCKER
Special To The Washington Post

As the United States pursues a peace deal with the Taliban and plans to withdraw forces from Afghanistan, one important consideration is notably missing from the deliberations: What will happen to our Afghan partners who served the U.S. mission after we leave?

When I was the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan, our embassy in Kabul relied on hundreds of Afghan staffers working in myriad roles. They risked their lives every day to work for the betterment of their country and ours. Likewise, U.S. forces and humanitarian workers relied on local staff who served as linguists, cultural advisers, security guards and maintenance staff. Due to their service to the U.S. mission, these trusted allies regularly faced and continue to face threats from anti-American forces, particularly by the Taliban, who have hunted and executed many Afghan partners and their families.

These Afghan partners have the opportunity to apply for special immigrant visas, which were specifically designed to protect our allies on the ground. Most who do so wait for the processing of their visas from within Afghanistan, remaining

in dangerous conditions, while others have fled for their lives to neighboring countries and are waiting in exile.



Crocker

whom they have targeted as traitors. As part of any planning for a reduction in forces, the U.S. government has a responsibility to protect those who served the United States and who worked tirelessly at great personal risk to protect U.S. personnel and advance the U.S. mission.

Further, as the United States draws down its presence, the expected reduction in staffing at the U.S. Embassy will likely diminish the embassy's ability to process visas — a process that already can take four years for many applicants. Congress has mandated that government processing of applications must be processed within nine months. The State Department must

comply with this requirement.

Let us not repeat the mistakes of the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. The United States, eager to end a prolonged conflict, signed the Paris Peace Accords, an ineffectual document gesture that did not result in peace. U.S. officials who had served shoulder to shoulder with Vietnamese partners watched in horror as their associates fled the country by sea or were executed or jailed for their service to the United States. Who can forget the horrifying image of desperate Vietnamese allies reaching for a helicopter leaving Saigon?

The State Department and vetting agencies must ensure that our Afghan partners can reach safety before the already poor security situation deteriorates further. The Defense Department, too, must demand this of the State Department in light of the mission-critical services that tens of thousands of Afghans have provided to U.S. troops since 2001.

Our Afghan partners have risked — and sometimes lost — their lives and those of their families to support the U.S. mission. As the United States is contemplating its exit strategy, the least we can do is ensure that our closest allies are part of the plan.

Ryan Crocker was the U.S. ambassador to Afghanistan in 2011-12. He is a diplomat in residence at Princeton University.

Sanctions alone won't make Iran behave

By DENNIS ROSS AND DANA STROUL
Special To The Washington Post

The Trump administration says its maximum pressure campaign on Iran is working. If only that were true.

The administration has consistently made the argument that economic sanctions would deprive the Iranian regime of money, and that less money would mean less bad behavior and more concessions at the negotiating table.

Bargaining with Iran is not the same as a closing a real estate deal, however, and Iran-sponsored terrorism is not easily reduced to counting dollars and cents. Less of one does not necessarily correlate to less of the other.

The inescapable conclusion, after surveying the region's conflicts, is that a U.S. strategy based exclusively on starving Tehran of money cannot by itself compel changes in Iran's regional behavior.

In Syria, Iran-backed Shiite militia groups may be suffering from salary cuts, but less take-home pay has not led to a reduction in violence, a reversal in battlefield gains by the regime of Bashar Assad, or a willingness by these foreign groups or Iranian forces to leave Syria. Militia fighters willing to travel to Syria from Afghanistan, Pakistan or Iraq will continue to answer Tehran's call because of ideology or the abnormal economic conditions in their own countries.

In Yemen, Iran-supported Houthi fight-

A U.S. strategy based exclusively on starving Tehran of money cannot by itself compel changes in Iran's regional behavior.

ers are intensifying the pace and sophistication of attacks against Saudi Arabia. Houthi ballistic-missile and drone attacks against civilian airports, oil pipelines and pumping stations in Saudi Arabia continue, with attacks now even in the eastern part of the kingdom. The evidence suggests that Iran is transforming its relationship with the Houthis from limited support in a local dispute to a regional partnership.

Sanctions pressure does not always equate to less Iranian cash for terrorism. In Gaza, Iran is reportedly increasing funding to Hamas from \$70 million each year to \$30 million each month, which is separate from the money it is giving Islamic Jihad.

Testifying to Congress in June, Brian Hook, the U.S. special representative for Iran, argued that U.S. sanctions have led to cuts in Iran's military budget in 2018 and in 2019. But these purported budget reductions did not translate into reduced threats in the Strait of Hormuz earlier this year, when Iran attacked with missiles and mines to seize commercial vessels, and shot down a U.S. drone. The Pentagon is not counting on the maximum pressure campaign to reduce Iran's military aggression; this month, it issued a yearlong warning of Iranian "aggressive actions" in the gulf.

Hook also noted that the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps' cyber command is low on cash. Yet a pair of cybersecurity firms pointed to Iran this year as the nexus in a wave of cyberattacks targeting government, telecommunications, and Internet infrastructure entities.

Taken together, the pattern does not back up the claim that the maximum pressure campaign is working. Well before the 2015 nuclear deal, Tehran had adopted

a low-cost, asymmetric strategy because it cannot compete with the large defense budgets and conventional military capabilities of the United States, or of regional rivals such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Sanctions alone will not be effective when Iran intentionally executes its regional terrorism campaign on the cheap.

A successful strategy toward Iran must be based on more than U.S.-imposed sanctions. Political isolation is also necessary, along with the credible threat of military force and readiness to offer Iran a way out of the economic pain and way in from the political cold.

Unfortunately, President Donald Trump has been far better at isolating the United States than he has Iran. His administration has signaled in both statements and actions its unwillingness to use military force except in the narrowest of circumstances, creating a rift between the United States and its partners in the gulf. Maximum pressure alienated European allies who have been integral to every other successful pressure approach imposed against Iran.

Taken together, these strategic mistakes have emboldened Iran's leaders. They clearly don't feel the need to talk to the administration, having turned down a meeting at the White House for their foreign minister and conditioning any talks on the administration lifting sanctions. And their attempt to use drones to carry out a terrorist attack against Israel shows their willingness to take risks.

History tells us that Iran will not be sanctioned into changing its behavior. A successful strategy toward Iran requires collective international pressure, the prospect that negotiations can offer credible economic gains and the threat of meaningful consequences for malign actions.

Dennis Ross, a former special assistant to President Barack Obama, is the counselor and William Davidson distinguished fellow at the Washington Institute. Dana Stroul is a senior fellow at the Washington Institute and previously a senior staff member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee covering the Middle East.

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After a 9-0 run by the Czechs, order was quickly restored. The Americans scored the next 10 points, kick-starting what became a 29-9 run in all.

Santana (27), Allen (8), Wendle (11),
 land IP 5 6 4 3 2 1
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 1 1 1 0 0 0 0 2
 1 1/2 4 4 4 0 0 0 2
 2 1/2 0 0 0 0 0 1

esac pitched to 1 batter in the 6th.
 s pitched to 2 batters in the 5th.
 -Clipped (Wendle). T-3:18. A.

MLB ROUNDUP

Strasburg fans 14, leads Nats past Marlins

Associated Press

WASHINGTON— Stephen Strasburg struck out 14 in eight crisp innings and Anthony Rendon homered twice Saturday, powering the Nationals to a 7-0 defeat of the Miami Marlins.

Strasburg (16-6) retired 22 straight after allowing two first-inning singles. The right-hander did not walk a batter while throwing 107 pitches, and he also contributed an RBI single at the plate.

"Fastball command was pretty good," Strasburg said. "I was able to throw my curveball for a strike when I wanted to and changeup was pretty good as well."

Juan Soto and Kurt Suzuki also homered for the NL wild card leaders, who have won three straight and eight of nine.

Rendon, who hit a game-ending single during Friday night's 7-6 victory over Miami, opened the scoring with his 30th homer with two out in the first.

The Marlins extended the franchise record with their 14th consecutive road loss.

Tigers 10, Twins 7: Minnesota capped a night of sensational slugging by breaking the major league record for home runs in a season, but that wasn't enough

to overcome host Detroit's seven-run third inning.

The Twins homered six times to bring their season total to 268, one more than the New York Yankees managed last year. Minnesota broke the mark when Mitch Garver led off the ninth with a drive to left for his second homer of the game.

Max Kepler, Jorge Polanco, C.J. Cron and Nelson Cruz also went deep for the Twins, who passed the 1997 Mariners (264 homers) during the game. Martin Perez (9-6) got the loss.

Cardinals 10-3, Reds 6-2: Matt Carpenter and Harrison Bader hit run-scoring singles during St. Louis' two-run ninth inning, sending the Cardinals to a sweep of the day-night doubleheader.

Dakota Hudson (14-6) led the Cardinals to the win in the opener, striking out eight.

Angels 10, Red Sox 4: Albert Pujols homered in a seven-run eighth inning, Mike Trout became the youngest player to reach at least 275 home runs and 200 stolen bases and host Los Angeles rallied for a victory over Boston.

Yankees 4, Athletics 3 (11): DJ LeMahieu homered on the first pitch in the bottom of the 11th inning, handing host New



NICK WASS/AP

York's first victory in five tries against Oakland this season.

Mets 6, Phillies 3: Wilson Ramos matched his career high with four hits and extended his hitting streak to 24 games, helping New York win at Philadelphia.

Brewers 2, Cubs 0: Manny Pina drove in two runs with

a first-inning single and Josh Hader finished a strong performance by Milwaukee's bullpen to win at Chicago.

Rays 9, Indians 6: Tommy Pham, Avisail Garcia, Ji-Man Choi and Travis d'Arnaud homered, powering host Tampa Bay to the win.

Blue Jays 6, Astros 4: Cavan Biggio and Teoscar Hernandez each hit a two-run homer, leading host Toronto past Houston.

Royals 7, Orioles 5: Whit Merrifield hit a tiebreaking sacrifice fly in the eighth inning after host Kansas City loaded the bases on three bunts.

Diamondbacks 6, Dodgers 5: Eduardo Escobar homered for the third straight game and host Arizona beat Los Angeles in front of a crowd of 50,180, a single-game attendance record for Chase Field.

Braves 11, White Sox 5: Dallas Keuchel collected his first RBIs since his rookie season and held Chicago to two runs in six innings in the win for host Atlanta.

Rangers 3, Mariners 2: Isiah Kiner-Falefa hit a walk-off single in the ninth inning after host Texas rallied with the help of a video review and beat Seattle.

Pirates 11, Rockies 4: Josh Bell hit his 35th homer, Kevin Newman homered on the first pitch of the game and Pittsburgh won at Colorado.

Padres 4, Giants 1: Wil Myers homered, Manny Machado was 2-for-3 with a triple and Joey Lucchesi pitched six strong innings as San Diego won at San Francisco.

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US OPEN/COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Defending champion Osaka dominates, consoles Gauff

Associated Press

NEW YORK — Naomi Osaka looked across the net after ending Coco Gauff's U.S. Open in the third round Saturday night and saw the tears welling in the 15-year-old's eyes.

Osaka also saw a bit of herself in the kid she'd just beaten 6-3, 6-0.

So the tournament's defending champion and No. 1 seed, who is only 21, comforted Gauff with a hug and words of consolation, then encouraged her to address the 23,000 or so folks in the Arthur Ashe Stadium stands who were pulling for the young American. Knowing how tough it is to lose, Osaka told her: "You need to let those people know how you feel."

So Gauff obliged — a rare instance of a match's loser addressing the crowd from the court. And was appreciative of Osaka's gesture.

"She just proved that she's a true athlete. For me, the definition of an athlete is someone who on the court treats you like your worst enemy, but off the court can be your best friend," Gauff said later at her news conference. "I think that's what she did tonight."

It's that sort of maturity off the court, and a wise-beyond-her-years game on it, that has helped Gauff generate all sorts of attention already. She was the youngest woman since 1996 to win two matches at Flushing Meadows, her follow-up to a captivating run



Naomi Osaka of Japan, above, defeated Coco Gauff of the United States, 6-3 and 6-0 Saturday during the third round.

ADAM HUNGER/AP

to the second week at Wimbledon in July.

In this much-hyped showdown under the lights, Gauff often looked exactly like what she is: an immensely talented player who is still learning her way at tennis' top level.

"We definitely know what we've got to work on," Gauff's father, Corey, said. "She wanted to win the match. It wasn't, 'See how well you can do.'"

Gauff pounded serves at up to 119 mph but also double-faulted seven times. She overcame a slow start to get within 4-3 in the opening set but also dropped the last eight games.

The U.S. Open was only the second Slam for Gauff, who was ranked No. 313 at the start of Wimbledon and is now No. 140.

Osaka's advantages in age and accomplishments — she is a two-time major champion, including at the Australian Open in January — played a role. So, too, did her on-target power, which resulted in a 24-8 edge in winners.

"For me, this is the most focused I've been since Australia," said Osaka, who's had an up-and-down season since earning that trophy and is wearing a black sleeve on the left knee that's been problematic lately.

When it ended, after merely 65 minutes, Gauff began to bawl on the sideline. Osaka approached her and they spoke, briefly, then later cried, too, while addressing Gauff's parents on-court.

Next for Osaka is a match Monday against 13th-seeded Belinda Bencic of Switzerland with a quarterfinal berth at stake. Other matchups Monday: American qualifier Taylor Townsend vs. No. 15 Bianca Andreescu of Canada, American wild-card Kristie Ahn vs. No. 25 Elise Mertens, and No. 23 Donna Vekic of Croatia vs. No. 26 Julia Goerges.

Moving into the men's fourth round were three-time champion Rafael Nadal and 2014 title winner Marin Cilic, who are the only past Grand Slam champs in their half of the draw and now must face each other. Cilic, the No. 22 seed, overcame his own 17 double-faults and withstood 40 aces from 14th-seeded American John Isner to win 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (6), 6-4. With Isner and Tennyis Sandgren losing Saturday, zero American men reached the fourth round.



PAUL W. GILLESPIE, CAPITAL GAZETTE/AP

Navy's Nelson Smith ran for 96 yards and three touchdowns in a 45-7 season-opening defeat Saturday of Holy Cross in Annapolis, Md.

Service academies roundup

Smith's 3 TDs powers Navy past Holy Cross in opener

Associated Press

ANNAPOLIS, Md. — The new-look Navy football team passed its first test with flying colors.

Nelson Smith ran for 96 yards with three touchdowns, Diego Fagot had nine tackles and the Midshipmen dominated Holy Cross 45-7 in the regular-season opener Saturday.

"I thought it was a great team win," Navy coach Ken Niumatalolo said. "I thought we played well today. We still have a lot of room for improvement. You can't take any of these wins for granted."

One of Niumatalolo's main areas of focus is improving the passing offense, which ranked last (130th) among FBS programs, averaging 72.8 passing yards per game in 2018. He wants to attack teams with elements of the run-and-shoot and Navy gained 103 yards through the air Saturday.

After passing for just 12 yards

through much of the first half, Malcolm Perry found Mychal Cooper for a 44-yard gain in the final minute. Two plays later, Perry scored from the 1, boosting the lead to 24-7 and the Midshipmen were never threatened the rest of the way.

Air Force 48, Colgate 7: The Falcons were in no rush to pass, so they rushed their way to a run-away win at home.

Donald Hammond III scored three of Air Force's seven rushing touchdowns and the Falcons ran their record to 24-0 against teams from the Football Championship Subdivision by beating the Raiders.

Kadin Remsburg added two scores for Air Force, which moved to 13-0 in season openers under coach Troy Calhoun. The Falcons didn't throw a pass until the third quarter — their only attempt of the game — but amassed 423 yards on the ground.

U.S. Open scoreboard

Saturday	
USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center	
New York	
(Seedings in parentheses)	
Men's Singles	
Third Round	
Pablo Andujar, Spain, def. Alexander Bublik, Kazakhstan, 6-3, 6-2	
Rafael Nadal (2), Spain, def. Chung Hyeon, South Korea, 6-3, 6-4, 6-2	
Alexander Zverev (6), Germany, def. Aljaz Bedene, Slovenia, 6-7 (4), 7-6 (4), 6-3	
Marin Cilic (2), Croatia, def. John Isner (14), United States, 7-5, 3-6, 7-6 (5), 6-4	
Diego Schwartzman (20), Argentina, def. Tennyis Sandgren, United States, 6-4, 6-1, 6-3	
Matteo Berrettini (24), Italy, def. Alexei Popov, Russia, 6-4, 6-4, 6-7 (3), 7-6 (6), 6-3	
Andrey Rublev, Russia, def. Nick Kyrgi, Australia, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (5), 6-2	
Kei Nishikori (15), Canada, def. Gael Monfils (13), France, def. Denis Shapovalov, Canada, 6-7 (5), 6-4 (4), 6-4 (6), 6-3	
Women's Singles	
Third Round	
Elise Mertens (25), Belgium, def. Andrea Pekovic, Germany, 6-3, 6-3	
Taylor Townsend, United States, def. Sorana Cristea, Romania, 7-5, 6-2	
Kristina Mladenovic (15), Canada, def. Caroline Wozniacki (19), Denmark, 6-4, 6-2	
Donna Vekic (23), Croatia, def. Yulia Putintseva, Kazakhstan, 6-3, 6-2	
Julia Goerges (26), Germany, def. Kiki Bertens (7), Netherlands, 6-2, 6-3	
Kristina Mladenovic (15), Canada, def. Jelena Ostapenko, Latvia, 6-3, 7-5	
Anna-Lena Freixas (1), Switzerland, def. Anett Kontaveit (21), Estonia, walkover	
Naomi Osaka (1), Japan, def. Coco Gauff, United States, 6-3, 6-0	
Men's Doubles	
First Round	
Feliciano Lopez, Dusan Djokovic and Pablo Carreno Busta, Spain, def. Cheng-Peng	

Hsieh, Chinese Taipei, and Christopher Rungkat, Indonesia, 6-2, 7-6 (2)	
Second Round	
Marcel Granollers, Spain, and Horacio Zeballos (8), Argentina, def. Evan King and Hunter Reese, United States, 6-4, 6-2	
Lukasz Kubot, Poland, and Marcello Melo (2), Brazil, def. Albert Ramos-Vinolas, Spain, and Jozef Kovalik, Slovakia, 6-4, 6-4	
Kevin Krawietz and Andreas Mies (12), Germany, def. Toby Alex Kodat and Martin Damm Jr., United States, 6-2, 6-2	
Duke Brannigan, Britain, and Ben McLachlan, Japan, def. Nikola Pietrangeli and Franko Skugor (9), Croatia, 6-3, 6-7 (4), 6-3	
Jamie Murray and Neal Skupski (15), Britain, def. Ricardas Berankis, Lithuania, and Juan Ignacio Londero, Argentina, 6-4, 6-4	
Leonardo Mayer, Argentina, and Joao Souzina, Portugal, def. Henri Kontinen, Finland, and John Peers (14), Australia, 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (4)	
Fabrice Martin and Jeremy Chardy, France, def. Matek Jazin, Tunisia, and Radu Albot, Moldova, 6-4, 6-2	
Jack Sock and Jack Wilder, United States, def. Eduardo Roger-Vasselin, France, and Austin Krajicek, United States, 7-6 (4), 2-6, 6-3	
Casper Ruud, Norway, and Miomir Kecmanovic, Serbia, def. Michael Venus, New Zealand, and Raven Klaasen (3), South Africa, 6-4, 6-6, 6-4	
Jonny O Mara, Britain, and Marcelo Arevalo Gonzalez, Salvador, def. Bruno Soares, Brazil, and Mate Pavic (6), Croatia, 7-6 (5), 6-4	
Raees Ram, United States, and Joe Salisbury (10), Britain, def. Matt Reid and Alex de Minaur, Australia, 6-4, 7-5	
Robert Farrah and Juan Sebastian Cabal (1), United States, def. Daniel Evans and Cameron Norrie, Britain, 5-7, 6-4, 6-3	
Women's Doubles	
First Round	
Latisha Chan and Hao-Ching Chan (7), Taiwan, def. Tatjana Maria, Germany, and	

Sofia Kenin, United States, 6-0, 6-2	
Yulia Putintseva, Kazakhstan, and Anna Kalinskaya, Russia, def. Monica Puig, Puerto Rico, and Dayana Yastremska, Ukraine, 3-6, 6-4, 6-3	
Second Round	
Kristina Mladenovic, France, and Timea Babos (1), Hungary, def. Oksana Kalashnikova, Georgia, and Ekaterina Alexandrova, Russia, 6-1, 6-4	
Barbora Strycova, Czech Republic, and Hsieh Su-wei (2), Taiwan, def. Maddie Linette and Iga Swiatek, Poland, 6-4, 7-6 (4)	
Zheng Saisai and Duan Ying-Ying (12), China, def. Sabrina Santamaria, United States, and Dalila Jakupovic, Slovenia, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1	
Laura Siegemund and Anna-Lena Friedsam, Germany, def. Alla Tomiljanova, Australia, and Maria Sakraki, Greece, 6-4, 6-1	
Vanja King and Caroline Dolehide, United States, def. Oksa Jaarum, Tunisia, and Fanny Stollar, Hungary, 6-4, 7-5	
Alexa Guarachi Mathison, Chile, and Bernard Pera, United States, def. Anna-Lena Groenefeld, Germany, and Demi Schuurs (9), Netherlands, 7-6 (3), 6-2	
Victoria Azarenka, Belarus, and Ashleigh Barty (8), Australia, def. Abigail Spears, United States, and Nadia Kichenko, Ukraine, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (10)	
Elise Mertens, Belgium, and Aryna Sabalenka (4), Belarus, def. Karolina Muchova, Czech Republic, and Jil Teichmann, Switzerland, 7-6 (1), 6-3	
Xu Yifan, China, and Gabriela Dabrowski (3), Canada, def. Christina McHale and Kristie Ahn, United States, 7-6, 6-1, 6-1	
Aleksandra Sasnovich, Belarus, and Viktoria Kuzmova, Slovakia, def. Taylor Townsend and Whitney Osuigwe, United States, 6-4, 6-2	

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COLLEGE FOOTBALL

Top 25 roundup

Nix rallies No. 16 Auburn past No. 11 Oregon

Associated Press

ARLINGTON, Texas — Auburn true freshman quarterback Bo Nix threw a 26-yard touchdown pass to Seth Williams with 9 seconds remaining to cap the No. 16 Tigers' comeback 27-21 comeback defeat of No. 11 Oregon.

Nix barely converted a fourth- and -3 at midfield on the final drive when he tucked and ran. Only the nose of the ball was past the chain when officials measured. Then on third-and-10 from the Oregon 39 with no timeouts, Nix hit Williams for 13 yards, and then found him again on the next play to put Auburn ahead for the first time.

The Tigers, who trailed 21-6 late in the third quarter, delivered another opening-weekend blow to the Pac-12. They beat the Pac-12's highest-ranked team in a season opener for the second year in a row — No. 6 Washington lost to them 21-16 in Atlanta last year. Nix finished 13-for-31 passing for 177 yards and two touchdowns, and also ran seven times for 42 yards. Ja'Tarvious Whitlow ran 24 times for 110 yards for the Tigers.

Justin Herbert, who bypassed early entry in the NFL draft to return to Oregon, was 28-of-37 passing for 242 yards with a touchdown.

No. 2 Alabama 42, Duke 3: Tua Tagovailoa threw for 336 yards and four touchdowns as the No. 2 Crimson Tide overcame a sluggish start to blow out the Blue Devils in the Chick-fil-A Kickoff Game in Atlanta.

Returning to the stadium where it won the Southeastern Conference title last December and the national championship two seasons ago, Alabama (1-0) was held scoreless in the first quarter — which happened only one time in 2018.

But Duke (0-1) merely delayed the inevitable. Tagovailoa put his tight end to good use. The left-hander hooked up with Miller Forristall on a 27-yard touchdown pass and then went to Major Tension for a 1-yard score.

No. 3 Georgia 30, Vanderbilt

6: Jake Fromm threw for 156 yards and a touchdown, and the visiting Bulldogs won their 20th opener in 23 seasons and stayed perfect to kick off coach Kirby Smart's 23rd season.

Georgia also easily won its 14th straight against the Southeastern Conference's Eastern Division in their first league game to open a season since 1995.

It sure didn't feel like a road trip with fans taking advantage of a holiday weekend to paint the stadium Bulldogs red.

No. 5 Ohio State 45, FAU 21: Justin Fields, in his first game in a Buckeyes uniform, threw four touchdown passes and ran for a score to lead host Ohio State.

Fields, the five-star transfer from Georgia, made it look easy early, engineering touchdowns on Ohio State's first four drives. Despite some occasional rookie mistakes that caused the Buckeyes' offense to sputter in the second and third quarters, Fields finished 18 for 25 for 234 yards and a 51-yard touchdown run.

No. 6 LSU 55, Georgia Southern 3: Joe Burrow tied a school single-game record with five touchdown passes before halftime and the host Tigers cruised to a win.

LSU (1-0) scored 21 points in the first quarter — something it never did in any quarter last season. Its point total was the most in a non-overtime game since scoring 63 against New Mexico State in 2014.

No. 7 Michigan 40, Middle Tennessee 21: Shea Patterson threw three touchdown passes in the first half to lead the Wolverines to a win at home.

Michigan unveiled its new-look offense and showed it has a lot of work to do with the ball. Patterson lost a fumble on the first play of the game and the senior quarterback had one of the team's two fumbles in the second half.

No. 10 Texas 45, Louisiana Tech 14: Sam Ehlinger threw four touchdown passes and the host Longhorns rolled past the Bulldogs to give coach Tom Herman his first season-opening victory in three years. Ehlinger was



RON JENNINGS/AP

Auburn quarterback Bo Nix threw two touchdown passes Saturday to lead the No. 16 Tigers to a 27-21 defeat of No. 11 Oregon.

coolly efficient from the start with scoring passes on three of Texas' first four possessions.

No. 13 Washington 47, Eastern Washington 14: Jacob Eason threw for 349 yards and four touchdowns in his first game in nearly two years in his Huskies debut.

Taking his first snaps since the 2017 season when he lost the starting job at Georgia to Jake Fromm, Eason showed no rust, carving up one of the top FCS programs in the country. Eason completed 27 of 36 passes and led host Washington (1-0) on touchdown drives on four of its first five possessions.

No. 15 Penn State 79, Idaho 7: Sean Clifford completed 14 of 23 passes for 280 yards and two touchdowns to lead the host Nittany Lions. Making his first career start, Clifford capped in 57 rushing yards on seven carries and hooked up with receiver KJ Hamler for scoring strikes of 36 and 21 yards.

Still recovering from back surgery for a herniated disk on Aug. 16 and a staph infection, Freeze coached from a hospital bed in the coaching box. The school said he was in communication with his coaches and players during the game and that the bed was used to support his healing back.

No. 23 Washington State 58, New Mexico State 7: Anthony Gordon completed his first 15 passes, threw for 330 yards and four touchdowns in the first half, and the host Cougars rolled.

Gordon made his first college start memorable throwing touchdowns of 41, 48, 19 and 54 yards in the first half as Washington State (1-0) built a 35-7 lead and coasted to an easy opening victory. Gordon finished 29-for-35 for 420 yards and five TD passes before checking out late in the third quarter.

No. 24 Nebraska 35, South Alabama 21: The host Cornhuskers scored two defensive touchdowns and one on special teams to bail out a sluggish offense.

Nebraska, a five-touchdown favorite, led only 14-7 at halftime and totaled just 66 yards in the second half. But the Huskers' defense had five takeaways, the biggest one Eric Lee Jr.'s 38-yard interception return for a touchdown, and JD Spielman ran back a punt 76 yards to make it a three-touchdown game early in the third quarter.

No. 25 Stanford 17, Northwestern 7: K.J. Costello threw a 2-yard touchdown pass before getting knocked out of the season opener on a late hit and the host Cardinal held on to defeat the Wildcats.

Costello completed 16 of 20 passes for 152 yards and the TD pass to Michael Wilson that capped a 90-yard drive in the second quarter for Stanford (1-0). But his day ended early when he was hit with a forearm to the face mask while sliding on a scramble by Earnest Brown IV with just 2 seconds remaining in the first half.

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Curve: Questions still remain about last season's quarterback draft class

FROM BACK PAGE

Mayfield, Darnold and Rosen are all adapting to new coaching staffs — never mind Rosen, who's dealing with the humbling reality of being discarded by the Cardinals after just one year.

Then there's Allen and Jackson, who are in the same offensive systems but face questions of whether they can develop into consistent passers after relying too much on their dynamic running abilities.

Former quarterback Boomer Esiason said the expectation is for quarterbacks to improve dramatically entering Year 2.

"Poise and accuracy. You should understand pocket presence more," he said. "The ability (to do these) leads to being a true leader."

And yet Rich Gannon, another former quarterback-turned-broadcaster, noted the expectation doesn't always hold true, especially for those forced to learn new systems.

"When we talk about and we see a lot of progress from Year 1 to 2 with a lot of quarterbacks, there's a footnote to that," he said. "It's not necessarily the case with young quarterbacks that undergo significant change in Year 2. In fact, in a lot of cases we see quarterbacks regress."

Gannon compared a quarterback's development to that of a 16-year-old learning to drive.

"All he is looking at is the road in front of him and the car in front of him. He's not seeing anything that's going on to the side or behind," he said. "By the second year, your vision expands. You see more and recognize more."

Though each is different, it won't prevent comparisons from being made, especially given three are in the AFC East and two in the AFC North — and because the schedule could have all five facing each other this season.

"I don't know what to make of that," Gannon said of the scheduling quirk.

"I never got into comparing things so much. I just think it's how good are you or your team? Are you a player that's ascending?" he added. "Those guys I would say have a lot to prove."

And that includes Mayfield, whom Gannon calls the most intriguing player of the class.

"I was really impressed with his poise, his presence, his command. He's been in big games before, so the attention is not too big for him."

Rich Gannon
former NFL QB, on
Cleveland Browns
QB Baker Mayfield

"I was really impressed with his poise, his presence, his command. He's been in big games before, so the attention is not too big for him, obviously," he said.

Kelly sidestepped a question about Mayfield, and shifted the conversation to another young quarterback entering his third season, but second as a starter.

"I think the guy I see as a heck of a quarterback, because I coached him at the Pro Bowl this past year, is Patrick Mahomes," Kelly said, referring to the Chiefs budding star and 2018 league MVP. "Right now, I'd have to put Patrick Mahomes above everybody in the NFL because he looks to me like a very special quarterback."

Here's a scouting report of the five first-round picks entering their sophomore seasons, listed by draft order:

Mayfield (No. 1 overall)



Mayfield

2018 stats: 6-7 record, 310 of 486 for 3,725 yards, 27 touchdowns, 14 interceptions.

Analysis: A lack of confidence isn't an issue for the brash-talking player, who has quickly won over Browns fans by his production — he's credited with four game-winning drives

already — and ability to chug a beer at a recent Indians game. With no love lost for former coach Hue Jackson, Mayfield welcomes Freddie Kitchens and the addition of receiver Odell Beckham Jr. to an offense that already features Jarvis Landry.

What he said: "I'm going to be me," Mayfield noted, in response to the buzz he generated for downing a beer while attending the Indians game against the Los Angeles Angels.

What others are saying: "There's a lot of hype around him right now, and he's got some swagger. I just want to see how much better he can be, and how much better that team can be," said Gannon.

Darnold (No. 3)



Darnold

2018 stats: 4-9, 239 of 414 for 2,865 yards, 17 touchdowns, 15 interceptions.

Analysis: Darnold showed progress as one of the NFL's most productive and efficient quarterbacks over the final month after missing three games with a foot injury. Upgrades at running back, with

the additions of Le'Veon Bell and Ty Montgomery, should keep opening defenses in check and open up passing lanes.

What he said: "I don't know what it's like to be a 10-year vet. But I definitely think there's a lot more comfortability," Darnold said in reference to coach Adam Gase saying he must feel like a 10-year veteran. "I grew a lot after last year."

What others are saying: "The few times that I've been in his presence and talking with him, he gives you a good vibe, a good feeling," Jets Hall of Fame quarterback Joe Namath said. "He's respectfully humble. Physically, he can play as well as anybody. He just needs to keep polishing himself, and the team needs to polish up."

Allen (No. 7)



Allen

2018 stats: 5-6, 169 of 320 for 2,074 yards, 10 touchdowns, 12 interceptions.

Analysis: Allen played to limited expectations in being raw, strong-armed and having accuracy issues, with his 52.8 completion percentage ranking 32nd in the NFL while over-

seeing a patchwork offense. He needs to show improvement and more patience in the pocket, given the attention the Bills placed in overhauling the offense by adding receivers Cole Beasley and John Brown, tight end Tyler Kroft, and retooling underperforming offensive line.

What he said: "I know there's still a lot I have to learn in this game, a lot that I have to do to improve, and I'm going to work my tail off until I get to where I need to be to help this football team win games."

What others are saying: "We want him to be aggressive, but we also want him, when the defense tells you, to chuck it down and get it to second-and-4," GM Brandon Beane. "This is his team. That's the biggest thing that I see from a year ago."

Rosen (No. 10)



Rosen

2018 stats: 3-10, 217 of 393 for 2,278 yards, 11 TDs, 14 interceptions.

Analysis: Red flags regarding his work habits and leadership skills raised before the draft didn't lower following his first NFL season, after which he was sent packing to the Dolphins when Arizona

selected Kyler Murray to begin the draft. Rosen opened camp behind veteran journeyman Ryan Fitzpatrick, with no clear indication of when he'll get an opportunity to start.

What he said: "I'm just trying to keep a level head. I've had some really bad days; try not to stay too bad. I've had some really good days; try not to get too high. I'm just trying to make whenever our next practice is better than it was today."

What others are saying: "He's probably the one that would concern me the most," Gannon said. "Just because you're a first-round pick, just because you have some arm talent, that doesn't mean (anything)."

Jackson (No. 32)



Jackson

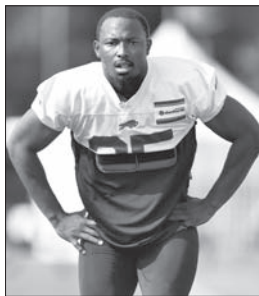
2018 stats: 6-2, 113 of 199 for 1,395 yards, eight TDs, four interceptions (including playoffs).

Analysis: Jackson took over for an injured Joe Flacco just in time to spark the Ravens' late-season surge to the playoffs.

Concern is, he did more with his running ability in leading than with his arm, topping 200 yards passing just once. He then produced a dud during the first three quarters of Baltimore's 23-17 loss to the Chargers in an AFC wildcard playoff before a late rally fell short.

What he said: "Just coming in a rookie, it is a lot different... But this year was like I already did it, so I just have to perform and come out and win."

What others are saying: "You can't live your life in fear," coach John Harbaugh said on whether Jackson is more at risk to being hurt by running too often. "I think there's just as much fear on the other side that he's going to take the thing to two because if he gets out and runs, too. So we'll live in that world as opposed to the other world."



ADRIAN KRAUS/AP

Two-time All-Pro running back LeSean McCoy will join the Kansas City Chiefs on a one-year deal after being released by the Buffalo Bills on Saturday.

Chiefs sign RB McCoy

1-year deal reunites 2-time All-Pro with ex-coach Reid

By DAVE SKRETTA
Associated Press

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — LeSean McCoy is going from a rebuilding franchise in Buffalo to a Super Bowl contender in Kansas City, and he's reuniting with his close friend and former coach Andy Reid, too.

The Chiefs and the two-time All-Pro running back have agreed to a \$4 million, 1-year deal, a person with knowledge of the negotiations told The Associated Press. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because McCoy must still pass a physical, which could be completed as early as Sunday.

That would allow him the week to prepare for the Chiefs' opener in Jacksonville next Sunday.

McCoy would become the top backup to Damien Williams, likely siphoning carries from rookie Darwin Thompson and backup Darrell Williams. The Chiefs traded the other veteran running back that was expected to earn carries, Carlos Hyde, after he failed to impress during training camp and the preseason.

The 31-year-old McCoy spent his first six seasons in Philadelphia, four of them under Reid, before spending the past four seasons with the Bills. The six-time Pro Bowl selection was released on Saturday, when general manager Brandon Beane cited the emergence of rookie Devin Singletary likely leading to a diminished role for a running back who for years has been a "bell-cow back."

"Difficult as it was, we always have to make what we think is the best decision for our team, and we just felt it was the right time to make this move," Beane said. "We did this being a running back-by-committee with whatever group we kept, and that would be a different role for LeSean."

Over the course of 10 seasons, McCoy has run for more than 10,600 yards, placing him 25th on the career list and fourth among active players. Some of his best seasons came under Reid, including the 2011 season in which he ran for 1,309 yards and 17 touchdowns while earning his first All-Pro nod.

NFL

NFC North preview

Tough Bears 'D' has company in division

By DAVE CAMPBELL
Associated Press

HBO's hit TV series "Game of Thrones," which racked up a record 32 Emmy nominations, became such a cultural force that it unintentionally spawned a slogan for one of the NFL's most tradition-rich divisions.

"Defend the North" was a familiar mantra for the mythical characters in the vicious drama. That might as well be the theme of this season for the Chicago Bears, who became NFC North champions last year for the first time since 2010 behind a ferocious defense led by All-Pro edge rusher Khalil Mack.

The Bears were the league leaders in turnovers forced and points allowed and ranked third in sacks and yards, the biggest reason they went 12-4 in coach Matt Nagy's first season. Mack, acquired in the blockbuster trade with Oakland eight days before the 2018 opener, is back to headline the unit along with fellow Pro Bowl picks cornerback Kyle Fuller, defensive tackle Akiem Hicks and safety Eddie Jackson.

The Bears have plenty of defensive company in this division, though.

The Minnesota Vikings, who stumbled to an 8-7-1 record after reaching the NFC title game, kept their deep, experienced group intact for coach Mike Zimmer's critical sixth year on the sideline.

Sure, the Green Bay Packers are still quarterback Aaron Rodgers' team. Their biggest offensive weapon, QB Matt LaFleur, is among their new coach, hoping to have the NFL's latest under-40 offensive maverick. They used free agency to find

three new starters on defense, including signing safety Adrian Amos away from the Bears. One source of optimism for a turnaround in Tittletown from a 6-9-1 finish starts with the acumen of defensive coordinator Mike Pettine, who stayed on staff after the changeover from the fired Mike McCarthy.

Don't forget the Detroit Lions, despite their 6-10 record in 2018. They've begun their second year under coach Matt Patricia, the defensive coordinator for two Super Bowl-winning teams with New England, with a spruced-up front four. They picked up former Patriots defensive end Trey Flowers in free agency and ex-Packers defensive tackle Mike Daniels, a 2017 Pro Bowl pick who became a salary cap casualty, right before training camp.

With the Bears (third), Vikings (fourth) and Lions (10th), the NFC North sported three of the top 10 defenses in the league last season in terms of yards allowed. Here's a closer look at the NFC North quarter in 2019:

New boss

The Bears again should be difficult to advance against, with offensive disrupters established at each of the three levels even if they can't maintain their torrid takeaway pace of 2018 with 27 interceptions and nine fumbles recovered out of 19 fumbles forced. Chuck Pagano replaced Vic Fangio as defensive coordinator after Fangio took the step up to become Denver's coach.

Assuming more progress by quarterback Mitch Trubisky and running back Tarik Cohen in Nagy's creative scheme,



Chicago Bears cornerback Prince Amukamara had three of the team's NFL-leading 27 interceptions last season. Chicago was No. 1 in turnovers forced and points allowed.

the position that could make or break Chicago's chance of repeating as division champion for the first time since 2006 is kicker. For now, that person is Eddy Piñero. He emerged from the drawn-out competition to replace Cody Parkey, who infamously missed a 43-yard field goal in the one-point loss at home to Philadelphia in the playoffs.

On the rebound?

The Vikings have failed to finish with a winning record twice under Zimmer (7-9 in 2014, 8-8 in 2016), and they followed each flop with a division title the next season. They'll lean on Zimmer's proud, seasoned defense to try to extend that trend, with all but one starter returning.

The offense under quarterback Kirk Cousins disappeared down the stretch last season. Zimmer's first remedy was to hire former Denver and Houston coach Gary Kubiak as an offensive adviser. Cousins has a new center, Garrett Bradbury, and a dynamic tight end, Irv Smith Jr., thanks to the first two rounds of the draft. Ultimately, Cousins must produce more of those clutch performances in critical games that his NFL résumé has so far lacked.

Quenching for the QB

Rodgers enters his 15th season in a new system under LaFleur, who was the offensive coordinator for Tennessee last year. The once-potent offense in Green Bay has not been nearly as dangerous in recent seasons, but the onus falls just as hard on Pettine's defense to help the Packers return to the playoffs after a two-year absence.

They signed pass rushers Za'Darius Smith and Preston Smith along with Amos in free agency, and they used first-round draft picks on outside linebacker Rashan Gary and safety Darnell Savage.

"It's just a different feel on that side of the ball," Rodgers said. "I feel like there's a little more juice."

Take it away

The Lions lost seven of their last 10 games last season, but the defense allowed a total of 27 points in the final four games. Premier run stuffer Damon Harrison Sr. leads a strengthened front that ought to help the Lions improve upon their 14 turnovers forced last year, and give quarterback Matthew Stafford more support.

Predicted order of finish: Vikings, Bears, Packers, Lions

Team capsules

Minnesota Vikings

New faces: CB Garrett Bradbury, RG Josh Kline, DT Shamir Stephen, TE Ty Smith Jr., RB Alexander Peterson, P/K Kaare Vedvik, LS Austin Cutting, WR Jordan Taylor, assistant head coach/offensive adviser Gary Kubiak.

Key losses: DT Sheldon Richardson, RB Latavius Murray, DT Tom Johnson, RG Mike Remmers, LG Tom Compton, PR Marcus Sherels, LS Kevin McDermott, SS Andrew Sendejo, WR Aldrick Robinson.

Strengths: Defense, entering third season in coach Mike Zimmer's aggressive, effective scheme, remains as reliable as there is in league. Vikings ranked fourth in NFL in yards allowed and ninth in points allowed last year, and front office managed to bring almost entire band back, losing only Richardson from starting lineup. DE Jason Allen, NT Ivin Jones and FS Harrison Smith are now 30-plus, but Smith in particular remains one of best in game at his position. LB Anthony Barr changed mind after verbal agreement to join New York Jets, keeping solid duo with Eric Kendricks in middle of defense. Adam Thielen and Stefan Diggs comprise one of best WR tandems.

Weaknesses: Offensive line, an concern until proven otherwise. Though QB Kirk Cousins made his share of mistakes in first season in Minnesota, he was often under duress. Run blocking was an even bigger problem last year, as Vikings finished with third-fewest rushing yards in NFL. Bradford will be asked to anchor group as rookie, with Pat Elflein moving to LG and Kline sliding in to his right. Kicking game continues to be in flux.

Expectations: After stumbling underweight of Super Bowl goal following NFC championship game appearance and signing of Cousins to fully guaranteed contract, Vikings enter 2019 with less buzz — exactly how Zimmer wants it.

Chicago Bears

New faces: Defensive coordinator Chuck Pagano, S Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, CB Buster Skifter, WR Cordarrelle Patterson, K Eddy Piñero, RB David Montgomery, RB Mike Davis, WR Riley Ridley, G Ted Larsen.

Key losses: Defensive coordinator Vic Fangio, S Adrian Amos, CB Bryce Callahan, WR Josh Bellamy, RB Jordan Howard, K Cody Parkey, G Bryan Witzmann, G Eric Kush.

Strengths: Pass rush and front seven overall are led by OLB Khalil Mack, who could improve on 12½-sack total after having full offseason and preseason to get ready — last year he had neither due to holdout. Roquan Smith, in second year, and veteran Darrius Trevathan at inside linebacker combine with DE Akiem Hicks and NT Eddie Goldman to key what was last year's No. 1 run defense. Pass coverage is nearly as good behind All-Pro S Eddie Jackson, All-Pro CB Kyle Fuller and veteran CB Prince Amukamara. Coach Matt Nagy's creativity, overall personnel versatility featuring RB Tarik Cohen, WR Allen Robinson, WR Taylor Gabriel and Patterson, and veteran blockers, create hope offense will produce more big plays.

Weaknesses: No one can be sure Piñero is answer after kicking game ended last season with QB Parkey's double-dunk missed field goal. QB Mitchell Trubisky struggled greatly last year, but needs consistency. Neither Montgomery nor Davis is proven NFL starter in backfield. Offensive line depth, particularly behind Charles Leno Jr. and Bobby Massie at tackle, is problem. Once Clinton-Dix and Skrine gain their bearings, little about defense should be troublesome.

Expectations: Improvement of Trubisky's downfield accuracy is anticipated by coaches. Schedule can make it tougher to repeat in NFC North: It's fifth toughest (5,200 opponents' win percentage) and last year they played NFL's easiest schedule (4,300).

Green Bay Packers

New faces: Coach Matt LaFleur, offensive coordinator Nathaniel Hackett, QB coach Luke Getsch, CB coach Adam Stenach, TE coach Justin Guttner, WR coach Alvin Whitted, ILB coach Kirk Olvadott, OLB coach Mike Smith, OL Billy Turner, OLBs Za'Darius Smith, Preston Smith and Rashan Gary, Ss Adrian Amos and Darnell Savage, CB Ka'dar Holloman, RB Dexter Williams.

Key losses: Coach Mike McCarthy, WR Randall Cobb, OLB Jay Matthews, DT Mike Daniels, FB John Kuhn, LB Nick Perry.

Strengths: Aaron Rodgers. Packers still have one of best quarterbacks in league who looks to rebound from relatively down year. Linebacker. Defensive coordinator Mike Pettine returns for second year with ILB Blake Martinez and new OLBs Za'Darius Smith, Preston Smith and rookie versatile athlete Gary that are expected to bolster Green Bay pass rush.

Weaknesses: WR depth. Packers have top receiving option Davante Adams who enters third season in Green Bay. Adams had career highs in receptions (111), receiving yards (1,386) and receiving touchdowns (13) one year ago. But options behind Adams still in question. Green Bay expects big seasons from WRs Marquez Valdes-Scantling, Equanimeous S. Brown, Geronimo Allison and TE Jimmy Graham. Rodgers also loves WR Kyle Kumerow.

Expectations: Six wins are unacceptable in Green Bay. Moves by GM Brian Gutekunst have made defense look bigger, faster and stronger. Offensively, as long as Rodgers is healthy and under center, Packers' expectations will be and should be high. Green Bay has missed playoffs in each of last two seasons. Chances there will be playoff-less third straight campaign are unlikely.

Detroit Lions

New faces: DE Trey Flowers, DT Mike Daniels, WR Danny Amendola, TE TJ Henderson and Jesse James, RBs C.J. Anderson, Justin Coleman and Rashan Melvin, S Andrew Adams, OL Odai Aboushi.

Key losses: S Glover Quin, DE Ezekiel Ansah, DT Ricky Jean Francois, OG TJ Lang, CB Nevlin Lawson, RB LeGarrette Blount, QB Matt Cassel, TE Michael Roberts, Levine Tolino and Luke Wilson, WRs Jermaine Kearse, TJ Jones and Bruce Ellington, LB Trevor Bates.

Strengths: Passing game and defensive line. QB Matthew Stafford has trio of talented WRs: Kenny Golladay, Marvin Jones and Amendola. Veteran TE (James) and first-round pick (Hockenson) give him more targets. Flowers was best player added in offseason, filling void created when team let Ansah leave in free agency. Daniels, former Pro Bowler in Green Bay, was signed in July after being cut in cap move. Newcomers join returning DTs Damon "Snacks" Harrison and A'Shawn Robinson along with DE Romeo Okwara.

Weaknesses: Backup QB and LB pass-coverage woes. Detroit desperately needs to keep Stafford on field. Tom Savage was signed to be No. 2 QB and has spent time in concussion protocol. Other options are Josh Johnson, three-game starter for Washington last season, and David Fales, who has never started NFL game. LBs Jarrod Davis, Devon Kennard and Christian Jones are strong against run, struggle against pass.

Expectations: Matt Patricia should at least approach .500 after losing 10 games in first season as head coach. New offensive coordinator Darrell Bevell will strike balance with RB Kerryon Johnson and Anderson, taking pressure off Stafford. If D-line plays to potential, franchise with one playoff victory since winning 1957 NFL title might play meaningful games in December.

— Capsules by The Associated Press

NFL

NFC East preview

Cowboys could hit roadblock in race with Eagles

By ROB MAADDI
Associated Press

While Dak Prescott and Amari Cooper wait to get paid, Ezekeil Elliott wants his money now.

The Dallas Cowboys have another obstacle standing in their way as they try to become the first team to win consecutive NFC East titles since the Philadelphia Eagles did it in four successive seasons from 2001-04. Contract issues could knock Dallas off track.

Elliott, the two-time NFL rushing champion, has been holding out for a new deal before he enters his fourth season. He's due to make \$3.9 million this year and \$9.1 million in 2020. Elliott could eventually end up the highest-paid running back in league history if the sides agree.

Prescott has led the Cowboys to a pair of division titles in three seasons, but watched Carson Wentz get a \$128 million contract extension from the Eagles despite finishing the past two seasons on the sideline while Nick Foles led Philadelphia to four playoff wins, including a Super Bowl title.

Prescott is willing to play for his \$2 million base salary knowing he's going to get a deal likely worth in the area of \$30 million annually. Cooper also is content entering the final year of his rookie deal because he will make nearly \$10 million.

"I want to be a Cowboy forever, the people doing the deal feel the same way, so there's no rush," Prescott said in the spring. "I know it'll get done. It's all generational money, life-changing money. I know I'll get taken care of."

The NFC East is a two-team race between Dallas and Philadelphia. The Eagles have a stacked roster, but their biggest question centers on Wentz's health. He tore his ACL in 2017 and suffered a back injury in 2018. Foles is in Jacksonville now, so the luxury of having a Super Bowl MVP backup is gone. Wentz arrived to camp in the best shape of his life and has plenty of talent surrounding him on offense.

"I think we have the ability to do something really special with this group, but it's going to take a lot of work," Wentz said.

Things to know about the NFC East:



PHILAN M. ERENNACH/AP

QB Carson Wentz's health will be a primary concern for the Philadelphia Eagles. Wentz has missed time due to a torn ACL and a back injury the past two seasons.

Dynamic offense

If Wentz stays healthy and plays like he did in 2017 when he finished third in NFL MVP voting, the Eagles should have one of the league's most powerful offenses. The addition of wide receiver DeSean Jackson to join Alshon Jeffery and Nelson Agholor gives the team a deep threat who will open

the field underneath for everyone else. Rookie wideout J.J. Arcega-Whiteside has Jeffery's jump-ball skills. Tight ends Zach Ertz and Dallas Goedert might be the best 1-2 tandem in the league. The run game should be improved with Jordan Howard's arrival from Chicago and rookie Miles Sanders, who has shined in camp.

Lame-duck coach?

Cowboys coach Jason Garrett enters the final year of his contract and has two playoff victories in nine seasons. With or without Elliott, he has to win now or owner Jerry Jones will have to make a tough decision. He's got the players on offense to help him. Prescott thrived once Cooper arrived last October, but he was sacked 56 times, second most in the league. The return of center Travis Frederick should bolster a unit that includes six-time Pro Bowl left tackle Tyron Smith and five-time Pro Bowl right guard Zack Martin. There's so much potential on offense that tight end Jason Witten left the "Monday Night Football" broadcast booth after one year to return for his 16th season.

All about the youngsters

Case Keenum has been named Washington's starting QB for Week 1, but rookie Dwayne Haskins, the 15th overall pick in the draft, is expected to see plenty of action this season. The Redskins have another exciting rookie first-round pick to watch, defensive end Montez Sweat, and everyone is waiting to see second-year running back Derrius Guice return from a knee injury that cost him his rookie season. Coach Jay Gruden is on the hot seat and his job status could hinge on the development of the young players.

Eli's replacement

The New York Giants drafted Eli Manning's eventual successor with the sixth overall pick, but it's uncertain when Daniel Jones will take over. Manning, 38, hasn't won a playoff game since winning his second Super Bowl in February 2012 and is nearing the end of a rebuilding team. Odell Beckham Jr. is gone, one of several unpopular moves by general manager Dave Gettleman. At least the Giants have Saquon Barkley. The dynamic second-year running back is worth the price of admission and can almost help the team pull off upsets by himself.

Predicted order of finish: Philadelphia, Dallas, Washington, New York Giants

Team capsules

Philadelphia Eagles

New faces: WR DeSean Jackson, WR J.J. Arcega-Whiteside, RB Jordan Howard, RB Miles Sanders, DT Manti Te'ol, LB Zach Brown, DE Vinny Curry, QB Cody Kessler.

Key losses: QB Nick Foles, DE Michael Bennett, LB Jordan Hicks, RB Jay Ajayi, DE Chris Long, WR Jordan Matthews, S Chris Maragos, S Corey Graham.

Strengths: QB Carson Wentz stays healthy, defense has potential to be dynamic. Jackson is team's best deep threat since he was here a few years ago. Zach Ertz/Dallas Goedert might be top tight end duo in league. Howard/Sanders combination in backfield could be special. O-line is among league's best units.

Weaknesses: Pass rush is area of concern after losing 15½ sacks from Bennett and Long. Team is counting on 2017 first-round pick Derek Barnett to fulfill potential and 31-year-old Brandon Graham to rebound from four-sack season after getting a \$2.7 million in guarantees in new deal. Linebacker depth is also issue. Secondary is deep but three starters are returning from season-ending injuries.

Expectations: Super Bowl or bust. Fans won't be satisfied unless there's another parade on Broad Street. After winning first Super Bowl title two years ago, coach Doug Pederson declared deep playoff runs "the new norm." Team has talent to do it but Wentz must stay healthy because Foles is in Jacksonville now.

Dallas Cowboys

New faces: TE Jason Witten, DE Robert Quinn, WR Randall Cobb, RB Tony Pollard, DT Trysten Hill, DE Kerry Hyder, DT Christian Covington, OL Connor McGovern, S George Iloka, S Donovin Wilson.

Key losses: WR Cole Beasley, TE Geoff Swaim, DL David Irving, LB Damien Wilson.

Strengths: Run game if Ezekiel Elliott ends holdout. Pass game improved significantly following midseason trade for WR Amari Cooper last year. One of league's best offensive lines gets Travis Frederick back after center missed 2018 with nerve disorder. DE DeMarcus Lawrence, LBs Jaylon Smith and Leighton Vander Esch lead talented young defense.

Weaknesses: No significant upgrades at safety, although returning starter Xavier Woods showed promise in camp. Young cornerbacks have talent, but not takeaways to show for it. CB Byron Jones missed offseason, camp coming off hip surgery. K Brett Maher was good on long kicks, inconsistent on short ones as surprise replacement for Dan Bailey last year.

Expectations: Super Bowl or bust for pro franchise just one season away from marking 25 years without trip to NFC championship game since fifth Super Bowl title. QB Dak Prescott has new, young play caller in Kellen Meade coming off two NFC East titles in three years, with 32-16 record, and first playoff win. Just like five years ago, Jason Garrett coaching for job in final year of contract.

Washington Redskins

New faces: QB Case Keenum, QB Dwayne Haskins, S Landon Collins, LB Montez Sweat, WR Terry McLaurin, LB Jon Bostic, WR Kelvin Harmon, LT Donald Penn, CB Dominique Rodgers-Cromartie, CB Jimmy Moreland, LB Cole Holcomb, G Wes Martin, OL Ereck Flowers, LB coach Rob Ryan, DB coach Ray Horton.

Key losses: QB Alex Smith (injured), WR Jamison Crowder, WR Maurice Harris, OT Ty Nsekhe, LB Mason Foster, LB Zach Brown, LB Preston Smith, S Ha Ha Clinton-Dix, LB Reuben Foster (injured).

Strengths: Led by Alabama duo Jonathan Allen and Aaron Payne. Washington's all 25-and-under D-line could wreak havoc. RBs Adrian Peterson, Derrius Guice and Chris Thompson provide bit of everything out of backfield. If TE Jordan Reed stays healthy and young WRs like McLaurin and Cam Sims show potential, Redskins' pedestrian group of pass catchers could be better than expected.

Weaknesses: Keenum and longtime backup QB Colt McCoy aren't stars and Haskins has strong arm and potential but isn't ready yet. Offensive line without LT Trent Williams and no sure answer at LG leaves much to be desired even before depth concerns kick in. Inside linebacker corps is major question mark.

Expectations: Coach Jay Gruden almost certainly will be fired if Washington doesn't exceed expectations and get to postseason.

New York Giants

New faces: QB Daniel Jones, G Kevin Zeitler, T Mike Remmers, WR Golden Tate II, DT Dexter Lawrence II, CB DeAndre Baker, S Jabril Peppers, S Antoine Bethea, LB Markus Golden.

Key losses: WR Odell Beckham Jr., S Landon Collins, LB Olivier Vernon.

Strengths: With Beckham in Cleveland, RB Saquon Barkley could lead the team as focal point of the offense. He can run. He can catch. He can go to end zone on any play. O-line seemingly improved, receivers group is solid with Sterling Sharpe, Tate, Bennie Fowler, Cody Latimer and TE Evan Engram. PK Aldrick Rosas had career year in '18. Secondary solid with CBs Janoris Jenkins, Baker and Sa Bethea, Peppers.

Weaknesses: Eli Manning's mobility against rush. Four-game suspension of Tate for PED use. Depth on O-line: G/C Spencer Pulley only real backup. James Betts's defense hasn't shown ability to pressure QBs. That was problem last year and isn't fixed despite addition of Lawrence and Golden. Unit has trouble getting off field.

Expectations: Better than last year, though not looking like playoff team. Offense has potential if revamped line opens holes for Barkley and gives Manning time to scan field and throw. Defense is draw-back, despite improved secondary. Front seven lacks push. Rebuild continues another year.

—Capsules By The Associated Press

SPORTS



Nix of time

Freshman QB rallies No. 16 Auburn
past 11th-ranked Oregon » **Page 27**

NFL

From left:
Sam Darnold,
Lamar Jackson,
Baker Mayfield,
Josh Rosen
and Josh Allen.

AP photos

Learning curve

Celebrated class of 2018 quarterbacks still finding its footing — and throwing

By JOHN WAWROW
Associated Press

Given the many variables that go into developing an elite quarterback, Jim Kelly can't even imagine assessing what to make of last year's group of five first-round draft picks as they enter their sophomore seasons. That doesn't mean the Pro Football Hall of Famer won't get questions regarding Cleveland's Baker Mayfield and Co.

"Good class, but yeah, it's definitely too early," Kelly said.

"Every time there's a good class that comes

out and they start off good, everybody starts comparing them to the class of '83. But until they've done it ...," he added, pausing, before praising the accomplishments of the 2004 rookie QBs: Eli Manning, Philip Rivers and Ben Roethlisberger.

Kelly, a member of the NFL's most celebrated quarterback draft class, didn't begin getting an inkling of how good he and the Bills could be until around his third season in Buffalo. That was when the Bills began forming a balanced identity on offense with the additions of running back Thurman Thomas and receiver Andre Reed.

"Bottom line, when I came into the league

I knew I could play," said Kelly, who spent his first two professional seasons in the USFL. "But I knew also that we were going to have to get the right players in here. Because I don't care who you are, you have to have the right players, you have to have the right system that is set for your skills."

If that's the case, Mayfield, the No. 1 pick, the New York Jets' Sam Darnold, Buffalo's Josh Allen, Miami-via-Arizona's Josh Rosen and Baltimore's Lamar Jackson have a long way to go before drawing comparisons to Kelly's draft class, which included fellow Hall of Famers John Elway and Dan Marino.

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